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MAN IN INDIA

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DESCENT AND CLAN AMONG THE DIMASA

DIPALI GHOSH

(*Received on 22 June 1965*)

Abstract. The Dimasa Kachari have two ways of reckoning descent for the two sexes. Male children reckon descent along their father's line, and female children along the mother's line.

Both men and women, however, recognize a certain subdued relationship with the clans of their mother and father respectively. These are avoided in marriage.

In the present paper, the author describes the relation between patri-clans and matri-clans, and also tries to find out how both have come to exist together in Dimasa society.

Introduction

THE Dimasa section of the Kachari people live in the North Cachar Hills District and in the plains of Cachar District in Assam.

The present study among the Dimasa was conducted in 4 villages in the Mikir Hills and 4 more villages in the North Cachar Hills. Jhum cultivation is practised in all these 8 villages, although there is a little wet cultivation where suitable land is available. In the jhums, cash crops like cotton, paddy, mustard, sesamum and vegetables are grown, and taken to the nearest market for sale.

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All the above villages are situated on elevated spots by the side of perennial streams. The first four villages consist of about 30 households each, except in one case where the number is 200. In the Mikir Hills the villages were smaller, consisting of 10 houses each.

Nature of Descent

A peculiar system of descent was observed in all the 8 villages in question. The male children reckon their descent along the father's line or *sengfong*. This is their primary affiliation; but they also feel related to the mother's clan, which is avoided in marriage. In a similar manner, the female children reckon descent along their mother's line or *jaddi*; but they feel secondarily related to the father's clan (*sengfong*) till marriage. After marriage a woman is adopted formally into the husband's clan. This becomes her new secondary affiliation when she loses her previous secondary affiliation to her father's clan. For both men and women, the secondary clan affiliation entails certain duties towards respective clan members. Besides, there is the rule that the secondary clan should be avoided by everyone in marriage.

In a patrilineal society, as among Hindu upper castes, a man traces descent through his father, and so does a woman until she is married. Then she enters the *gotra* of her husband. In such a society, marriage is avoided in one's *gotra* as well as with members of one's kin-group. The *gotra* of the mother is not considered taboo for this purpose by a man or a woman except among some castes. By contrast, among the Dimasa, the choice of mates is regulated specifically by means of clans instead of otherwise. Hence clans play a more important part in the latter case than under the Hindu *gotra* system.

The rule of descent among the Dimasa is as follows. The sons are affiliated to their father's *sengfong*; but the daughters belong to the mother's *jaddi*. The So and SoSo all belong to the Fa's *sengfong*; but the Da, SoDa and SoDaDa belong to their respective mother's *jaddi*. It can be said that all the sons of all the brothers become members of the same *sengfong*, but the daughters differ in *jaddi*. Similarly,

Da Da and Da Da Da all belong to the *jaddi* of the MoMo and MoMoMo, i.e. all the daughters of all the sisters belong to the same *jaddi*. It is clear from what has been stated above that both the patrilineal and the matrilineal forms of descent are present in the Dimasa villages observed; each being restricted to the sexes separately.

As has been said, the clan from which a man is descended is called his *sengfong*, while the one from which a woman is descended is called her *jaddi*. It is the etiquette to put the following question to a man and woman regarding their parent's clan. To a man: What is your *sengfong* and what is your mother's *jaddi*? To a woman: What is your *jaddi* and what is your father's *sengfong*?

The *sengfongs* or patri-clans have their area-gods. But *jaddis* or matri-clans have nothing of the kind. We have also said that a girl loses her secondary affiliation to her father's *sengfong* on marriage, when she is formally adopted into her husband's clan by a ceremony. Nothing like this takes place in the case of a man after marriage. He develops no formal relationship with the clan of his WiMo. We can therefore say that the patri-clan is functionally more important than matri-clan in the Dimasa villages observed.

Clan and Marriage

As the villages observed are in constant economic contact with the plains people, a new development has been taking place among them. The latter do not have anything corresponding to the *jaddi* or matri-clan of the Dimasa. The Dimasa have recently developed a tendency to conceal the presence of their matri-clans and matrilineal descent of their women from outsiders. Nowadays girls are being sent to school, and they are being given the surname of their father (which is that of his *sengfong*) as in the case of their Assamese or Bengali classmates.

It is however important to remember that the old rules of primary and secondary relationship to clans is more or less strictly maintained in regard to marriage. Actually, it was observed in the village of Hajadisa (Mikir Hills) that the rule

of avoiding the patri-clan has been broken in 16 out of a total of 44 marriages. There was not a single case of breach of the rule regarding avoidance of the matri-clan for the same purpose. In the case of 4 villages in North Cachar Hills District, no case of breach was observed at all in regard to either the *sengfong* or the *jaddi*.

The rule regarding breach of the custom of exogamy is punishable by excommunication. This is particularly true of the North Cachar Hills. But in 16 cases in the Mikir Hills District, it was observed that the guilty persons were fined and then allowed to remain as husband and wife. It was the opinion even in the Mikir Hills that any one guilty of breaking the rule of avoiding the matri-clan in marriage could not be pardoned after a fine, but would be excommunicated. An exception was found in the case of the Thaosen clan. The king is said to have allowed members of this clan to take wives from within their own patri-clan or *sengfong*. But even here, the rule of avoiding the matri-clan or mother's *jaddi* is strictly observed.

Marriage takes place between the hinduized Dimasa of Cachar District and the Hill Dimasa of the North Cachar Hills, as both of them observe the rules relating to *sengfong* and *jaddi*. In contrast to the Dimasa Kachari, the Boro Kachari have no concept of a matri-clan or *jaddi*. So no marriage takes place between the Dimasa and Boro.

We have already said that a woman is adopted formally into the *sengfong* of her husband after marriage. This is done by a ceremony in which the HuFa has to perform *Madaikhi-limba*, or worship of the clan-god, just after the marriage of his son.

We observed an interesting custom in the rather primitive village of Senkhor. This was in connexion with offerings made in a funerary ceremony. When a man dies and an animal is sacrificed in the funeral, the meat of the backbone is presented to the male members of the patri-clan or *sengfong* and the hind-legs to the female members of the same clan. In the case of an unmarried woman, the same rule is strictly observed; but if the woman is married, then the meat of the backbone and

that of the hind-legs is given to the men and women of the husband's patri-clan or *sengfong*, because she had severed her connexion with her father's patri-clan on marriage. It is interesting that the funerary offerings of meat are not distributed by any rule to the matri-clan or *jaddi*. While examining the case records in the court of the District Council, North Cachar Hills, it was observed in one case that a breach of the above rule about presenting meat to the *sengfong* was brought up for decision. The fact that the due present had not been made was a grave insult to the party concerned.

Rules of Residence

Patrilocal residence is the general rule. But the descent in female line has a bearing on the residence pattern. Two women belonging to two different clans are not allowed to stay in the same house. For this reason, among the Dimasa, the family can never be extended. The important feature of the Dimasa residence pattern is that the son must build a new house after marriage. This is because his mother and his wife, being women of different clans, can never live together under the same roof. If they are compelled to live together under unavoidable circumstances, they may do so, but in no case can use each other's garments, hair oil, combs etc. These taboos are strictly observed in Dimasa society. If any man is married a second time, his daughter cannot live with his second wife if they happen to belong to two different *jaddis*. The daughter has no other way but to live elsewhere with some female member of her matri-clan.

There is a custom for the men only to live one year in the wife's house after marriage; this being known as *minhabba*. He may stay longer until he sets up a new house of his own. It is more often found that many people have settled in their wives' villages, though they were at liberty to construct homes in their father's villages.

Property Rules

Property goes from father to son, i.e. along the male line. Any property of the mother goes to her daughter but never to

the son or son's wife. It is quite commonly observed that a married son becomes careless about his parents; specially in relation to an old widowed mother, although he is expected to be more considerate. In contrast, the daughter always cares for her mother; this being treated as her duty. A man more readily helps his mother-in-law than his mother. This was actually observed in many of the families in the 8 villages under observation.

Clan Solidarity

Clan consciousness is so strong that affiliation through clan is given more importance than the actual affinal relationship. It was observed in a village that two persons, having different clans, have married two sisters and became brothers-in-law to each other. Consequently they should address each other as *sto*, which is an affinal term; but instead they call each other brothers, as their mothers belong to the same *jaddi*. The clan bondage is so strong that any offence done to a member by a man of a different clan is taken cognizance of.

Names and Number of Clans

All Dimasa people belong to widely dispersed patri-clans and matri-clans. Each clan has its distinctive name which represents some natural objects or animal, tree, etc. Although totem-like names are used to designate clans, the Dimasa do not think that they are descended from these objects. There is also no taboo regarding killing or eating the meat of these animals. Clearly, the objects which have given names to the clans are not regarded as totems. They are merely names. There are a few names which suggest differences in original occupations.

There are 42 patri-clans and 42 matri-clans in all. It is said that when Dimapur was the capital of the Kachari kingdom, there were only 7 *sengfongs*. It became 12 in number when the capital was shifted to Maibang; and lastly became 42 at Khaspur. (The list of *sengfongs* and *jaddis* is given in the appendix.) Up to the Dimapur period, there is no evidence of the existence of *jaddi*. All

aged Dimasa men interviewed were of opinion that later they were surrounded by other tribes like the Kuki, Naga etc., when Dimasa men could marry the women of other communities and accept them into their community. To prevent this, the king called an assembly of the Dimasa women and created *jaddis* for them.

In the villages of Semkhor and Gidingpur, while asking about *jaddis*, it was observed that some women were hesitant to name it. The local Dimasa interpreter later on explained, that those women did not belong to any *jaddi* whatsoever, and were looked down upon. They were not usually married, but a few marriages had taken place for personal reasons.

No hierarchical demarcation is present among these 42 *sengfongs* and 42 *jaddis*. All of them enjoy equal status. Out of these, 4 *sengfongs* and 4 *jaddis* are called *dang*. These are the *sengfongs* treated as *dang* :

Sengfongs—Riao, Khemprai, Phonglosa, Seingyung.

Jaddis—Mairungma, Saidima, Miungma, Banglaima.

Dang clans lived near the king and took a leading part in all royal activities. The *dang* has got no social implication to-day. The clan which forms a numerical majority holds the superior position in a particular locality. Of all the clans, Langtasa forms the majority. It has 12 sub-clans. The sub-clan is called *hisong*. The Thaosen clan has 5 sub-clans, Phonglosa has 9, and Langtasa 12.

Conclusion

Among the Dimasa, there are two kinds of clans, namely, *sengfong* and *jaddi* which signify two lines of descent. *Sengfong* is and was always patrilineal and it is transmitted through the male descent group. Conversely, *jaddi* is always transmitted through the female line. Thus, the Dimasa have two unilineal descent systems operating simultaneously. According to tradition, the *jaddi* was not present in earlier times. This was apparently innovated by the Kachari king to restrict marriage within the group. A unilinear society thus adopted the double system of descent. But Dimasa society shows more affinity to

patriliny, as a man has relation with his mother's clan in a very submerged way. However, the *jaddi* has now grown strong and forms an important element of the social structure.

The Dimasa type of descent is unique in this part of India. But a sort of similarity is noticed between the Dimasa and the Apinaye of Brazil and Luguru of Africa, as both the sexes of these societies follow two lines of descent. The Dimasa system corresponds most closely to the 'double system' described by Murdock. According to him, double descent 'combines patrilineal and matrilineal descent by assigning the individual to a group of each type.' (Murdock 1949, 15.)

APPENDIX

List of the Sengfongs

Sengfong	Meaning
1. Naidingsa	Son of Scout
2. Nabingsa	„ „ Angler
3. Seingyunsa	„ „ Big sword
4. Khewpraisa	—
5. Adaosa	—
6. Daudungsa	Son of a kind of bird
7. Disausa	„ „ river
8. Riausa	„ „ swimmer
9. Langtasa	„ „ a naked man
10. Daudunglangta	„ „ a bird
11. Lamphusa	Hole in the way
12. Daulagopo	White cock
13. Daulagajao	Red cock
14. Hakmansa	Kidnapped
15. Longmailaisa	Pebbles
16. Hagjersa	Intermediary
17. Phurusa	Full
18. Phonglasa	Son of fat man
19. Thaosensa	Son of oil-smearer
20. Haflongfansa (a Naga Word)	Big mound
21. Hojaaisa	Son of a priest
22. Batarisa (Bodosa)	—

Errata

We regret the following errors, and hope the reader will please
make the necessary corrections in his copy.

			For	Read
P. 188	line 33		Senkhor	Semkhor
P. 191	lines 16, 17, 20, 21		<i>dang</i>	<i>dauga</i>
P. 192	line 4		impootant	important
	Sengfong			
	4.		Khewpraisa	Khempraisa
	14.		Hakmansa	Hakmausa
	18.		Phonglasa	Phonglosa
P. 193	37.		Dlphuva	Diphusa
	40.		Baderleagia	Baderbagia
	Names of Jaddis			
	1.		Gachauna	Gachauma
	9.		Bairingma	Bairingsa
	13.		Mainengama	Mairangma
	17.		Mairungma	Mairangma
P. 194	23.	...	Gedefa	Gedeba
	24.	...	Khaiba	Khasiba
	27.		Hamlaiginindi	Hamlaigimindi

23. Daliyasanta	Name of a river
24. Hasnusa	Sand
25. Londisa	—
26. Jibragede	Big confluence
27. Wolarisa	To cut a tree
28. Haphilasa	—
29. Lafthaisa	Small gourd
30. Karigabsa	Alkaline ash
31. Gorlosa	—
32. Johorisa	—
33. Maibangsa	Plenty of paddy
34. Kersa	—
35. Parbasa/Girisa	Hill or mountain
36. Laobangdisa	—
37. Diphuva	Name of a river
38. Jrambusa	—
39. Mitherfansa	—
40. Baderleagia	—
41. Nonisa	—
42. Surungfansa	—

Names of Jaddis

1. Gachauna
2. Rajama
3. Saidima
4. Miungma
5. Madaima
6. Buguma
7. Ranima
8. Gorni
9. Bairingma
10. Banglaima
11. Kalachanma
12. Maibrangma
13. Mainengama Dauga
14. Saidima „
15. Miungma „
16. Banglaima „
17. Mairungma
18. Desrikui

19. Saikhudi
20. Sagaodi
21. Hamthaidi
22. Samder Sagaodi
23. Draingsongma Gedefa
24. Draingsongma Khaiba
25. Pasaidi
26. Maibang gojodi
27. Hamlaiginindi
28. Tharaju
29. Thaliyu
30. Pakhaju
31. Againaju
32. Panthaobarjilu
33. Longmaisajilu
34. Anumajilu

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SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF NUCLEAR HOUSEHOLDS

A. B. BOSE AND P. C. SAXENA

(Received 10 February 1965)

Abstract : The authors have studied the composition and characteristics of 653 nuclear households in a number of villages in the Jalore District of Rajasthan. This is by way of supplementing an earlier work on joint households.

Introduction

EARLIER Indian studies on households have related to the inter-relationship between members or their size, composition, change and disintegration (Dube 1955; Kapadia 1958; Morrison 1959; Mayer 1960; Ross 1961; Hallen and Theodorson 1961, 1963). Investigations in the central and lower Luni basin in Western Rajasthan indicated that almost half the households were joint (Bose *et al.* 1963). Detailed analysis of the composition of such households and their relationship to various factors showed how the various components varied with the age of household head and the size of household (Bose and Saxena 1964). A similar analysis was considered useful for nuclear households¹ to enable a better understanding of their structure and function.

Method of Study

Investigations were conducted in Jalore District, Rajasthan, which is spread over 12,732 square kilometers and has a population of 5,47,072. For the collection of data a 2-stage

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¹ A household has been defined as a group of persons living together and taking food from the same kitchen. A nuclear household comprises the husband, wife and children.

sampling procedure was adopted. At first a sample of one in fifteen villages was taken in each Community Development Block by the method of systematic sampling. In each sample village, all the households were enumerated and a sample of twenty per cent drawn by the method of simple random sampling. The data were collected in 1961-62. The total number of schedules filled from the heads of nuclear households was 653.

Findings

In the region surveyed, 53.6 per cent of the households are nuclear. The types of nuclear households are indicated in

TABLE 1

Types of nuclear households

Type	No.	%
Head only	23	3.5
Head and wife	37	5.7
Head, wife and children	531	81.3
Others	62	9.5

Table 1. The data show that only 3.5 per cent nuclear households are uni-member while 5.7 per cent are of the husband-wife type. The others have children.

The changing size of nuclear households as the head passes through different stages of the life cycle is indicated in Table 2. The average age of head of nuclear household is 42.4 years as

TABLE 2

Age of head and size of nuclear household

Age of head (in years)	Size										Total	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
15-24	3	14	12	5	1	3	1	—	—	—	39 (6.0)	3.00
25-34	6	9	40	35	31	18	6	5	1	—	151 (23.1)	4.22
35-44	3	11	19	30	47	39	29	17	3	3	201 (30.8)	5.31
45-54	3	11	19	26	34	31	23	16	7	2	172 (26.3)	5.31
55 & above	8	12	15	17	14	8	10	4	1	1	90 (13.8)	4.27
Total	23	57	105	113	127	99	69	42	12	6	653 (100.0)	4.78
	(3.5)(8.7)(16.1)(17.3)(19.5)(15.2)(10.6)(6.4)(1.8)(0.9)											

compared to 44.1 years of the joint household (Bose & Saxena 1964). The difference between the means is significant. Only 9.1 per cent nuclear households have more than 7 members as

compared to 35.7 per cent joint households. The average size of nuclear household increases with a rise in the age of the head, reaching the peak in the age groups 35-44 years and 45-54 years, after which there is a decline. This is natural since, in the initial stages with increasing age of the household head, children are added to the family. Subsequently, married daughters leave and some of the married sons secede to form a separate household.

The relationship of the child component to the age of the heads of nuclear households is shown in Table 3. The data show

TABLE 3

Age of head and number of children under 15 years per nuclear household

Age of head (in years)	Number per household								Total	Mean
	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
15-24	21	7	7	—	3	1	—	—	39	0.97
25-34	17	41	34	35	13	6	4	1	151	2.16
35-44	16	18	35	43	51	24	13	1	201	3.11
45-54	23	17	34	36	34	19	7	2	172	2.79
55 & above	30	17	19	12	9	2	1	—	90	1.59
Total	107	100	129	126	110	52	25	4	653	2.47
	(16.4)	(15.8)	(19.8)	(19.3)	(16.8)	(8.0)	(3.8)	(0.6)	(100.0)	

that the average number of children rises with the increase in age of the household head, reaching the peak in the age group 35-44 years, after which there is a gradual decline. At this stage there are few additions to the family and the older children have crossed the age of 15.

The changing adult (15 years and above) component (excluding the head and his wife) in relation to the age of the heads of nuclear households is indicated in Table 4. The data show that hardly three-tenths of nuclear households have 1 or

TABLE 4

Age of head and number of members 15 years and above per nuclear household (excluding head and his wife)

Age of head (in years)	Number per household					Total	Mean
	None	1	2	3	4		
15-24	36	8	—	—	—	39	0.15
25-34	135	8	7	1	—	151	0.16
35-44	164	29	8	—	—	201	0.22
45-54	88	67	16	1	—	172	0.54
55 & above	41	23	22	3	1	90	0.89
Total	464	133	53	5	1	653	
	(71.1)	(19.9)	(8.1)	(0.8)	(0.1)	(100.0)	

more adult members (15 years and above) excluding the head and his wife. As may be expected, the average number of adults increases with the rise in age of the household head.

Table 5 gives the number of earners per household with heads in different age groups. The average number of earners

TABLE 5

Age of head and number of earners per nuclear household

Age of head (in years)	Number per household						Total	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
15-24	10	20	7	2	—	—	39	2.02
25-34	21	109	13	6	2	—	151	2.07
35-44	24	95	49	22	9	2	201	2.52
45-54	16	51	49	36	15	5	172	2.99
55 & above	20	19	23	17	5	6	90	2.95
Total	91	294	141	83	31	13	653	2.55
	(13.9)	(45.0)	(21.6)	(12.7)	(4.8)	(2.0)	(100.0)	

reaches the peak in the age group 45-54 years of the household head, after which it tends to decline. The number of members in the working age group (15-54 years) shows a similar trend.

The relationship between earners and size of nuclear households is given in Table 6. The data show that only 6.8 per cent nuclear households have more than 4 earners per

TABLE 6

Size and number of earners per nuclear household

Size	Earners per household						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	23	—	—	—	—	—	23 (3.5)
2	17	40	—	—	—	—	57 (8.7)
3	16	62	27	—	—	—	105 (16.1)
4	12	67	18	16	—	—	113 (17.3)
5	11	61	38	14	3	—	127 (19.5)
6	6	47	20	18	5	3	99 (15.2)
7	2	13	25	23	4	2	69 (10.6)
8	4	2	10	9	15	2	42 (4.4)
9	—	2	1	3	2	4	12 (1.8)
10	—	—	2	—	2	2	6 (0.9)
Total	91	294	141	83	31	13	653 (100.0)
	(13.9)	(45.0)	(21.6)	(12.7)	(4.8)	(2.0)	(100.0)

household. The co-efficient of correlation between size of household and number of earners per household is +0.582, which is significant, indicating thereby that the number of earners per household tends to increase with size.

The age and sex composition of earners and dependants is given in Table 7. In all the age groups there is a larger percentage of male workers. In an average nuclear household of 4.78 members, there are 2.55 earners, of whom 1.55 are male and 1.00 female. In other words, 60.8 per cent earners in

TABLE 7

Age and sex composition of earners and dependents in nuclear households

Age (in years)	Earners			Dependants		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
0-14	170 (59.8)	114 (40.2)	284 (100.0)	696 (52.3)	634 (47.7)	1330 (100.0)
15-34	385 (58.6)	271 (41.4)	656 (100.0)	18 (29.5)	43 (70.5)	61 (100.0)
35-54	372 (59.0)	258 (41.0)	630 (100.0)	4 (11.1)	32 (88.9)	36 (100.0)
55 & above	87 (89.7)	10 (10.3)	97 (100.0)	4 (15.4)	22 (84.6)	26 (100.0)
Total	1014 (60.8)	653 (39.2)	1667 (100.0)	722 (49.7)	731 (50.3)	1453 (100.0)

nuclear households are males. 46.6 per cent of the population is dependent in nuclear households as compared to 42.4 per cent in joint households (Bose and Saxena 1964). The difference is significant and is due to the larger percentage of children in nuclear households (51.7 per cent as compared to 39.1 per cent in joint households).

Summary

The findings of this study on nuclear households may be summarized as follows :

- (i) Only 3.5 per cent households are uni-member and 5.7 per cent are of the husband-wife type. The others have children.
- (ii) The average age of the head of a nuclear household is 42.4 years. The average size of nuclear household reaches the peak in the age group 35-54 years of the household head, after which there is a decline.
- (iii) The average number of children rises with the increase in age of the household head, reaching the peak in the age group 35-44 years after which there is a gradual decline.

- (iv) The average number of members, 15 years and above (excluding the head and his wife) increases with the age of the household head.
- (v) The co-efficient of correlation between size of household and number of earners per household is +0.582, which is significant, indicating thereby that the number of earners per household tends to increase with size.
- (vi) 53.4 per cent of the population in nuclear households are earners. Six-tenths of the earners are males.

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KASBA NARAYANGARH

A MUSLIM VILLAGE

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Abstract : The author presents an ethnographic account of a village in West Bengal in which Muslims and Hindus live together, and participate in numerous common activities. It shows in what aspects of social life, they act separately and in what jointly.

KASBA Narayangarh is a Muslim village, situated in the Sadar Subdivision of Midnapur. Narayangarh is said to owe its name to a local zemindar, Narayanballabh Pal, Sadgop by caste, who is said to have established this village and built a fort and a palace here. In the 17th century, Khurram, later known as Emperor Shahjahan, revolted against his father, and came to this particular tract from the south in search of shelter and safety. The local influential zemindar, Narayanballabh, gave him protection. Since that time, Muslims have settled in batches in this tract. The zemindar also employed a few Muslim soldiers. In 1646-58 A.D. Shah Shuja, second son of the Emperor Shahjahan, was appointed governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He stayed in Midnapur for a long time. A mosque was built here, and this particular village began to flourish under his administration. The name 'Kasba' was added to it, which signifies a 'little town'. There was a foot-track at that time from Khargpur to Balasore through the village leading to Puri. Now, the Orissa Trunk Road runs through Narayangarh. This place was visited by Sri Chaitanya (1485-1533) on his way to Puri. There is an old shrine of Brahmāni and a few other less important temples in this locality. Some *dargas* or tombs of Muslim saints or Pirs are also found here. There are few a big

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silted tanks in the village, the dates of excavation of which are uncertain.

The village consists of 6 *mahallas* or wards. Table 1 contains the details of population of the wards and Table 2 gives the particulars of the Muslim community.

TABLE I
Population of the wards

Wards	Caste/Community	No. of Families	Population
Kasba Brahmāni	(i) Brahman	3	31
	(ii) Mahishya	2	10
	(iii) Dom/DRUMMER	1	6
	(iv) Lodha	51	180
Kasba Old Market	(i) Vaishya	3	15
	(ii) Mahishya	1	6
	(iii) CONFECTIONER	1	6
	(iv) OILMAN	3	16
	(v) BLACKSMITH	4	23
	(vi) CARPENTER	9	51
	(vii) Hadi/SWEEPER	30	138
Kasba West Mahalla	(i) Muslim	26	197
Kasba Narayangarh	(i) Brahman	2	9
	(ii) Kayastha	2	9
	(iii) Karan	10	76
	(iv) Mahishya	1	4
	(v) Sadgop	2	14
	(vi) Kshatriya	1	4
	(vii) SPICE-DEALER	4	25
	(viii) CONFECTIONER	1	7
	(ix) BARBER	2	12
	(x) MILKMAN	1	7
	(xi) WASHERMAN	3	15
Kasba Nazir Mahalla	(i) Muslim	37	146
Kasba West Mahalla	(i) Muslim	29	126

It has been observed that Muslims live as a compact group in compact areas, although Kasba West Mahalla or ward, practically overlaps Kasba Old Market. It is very difficult to draw a boundary between these two wards.

Divisions

The Muslims of this village all belong to the Suuni sect, having the surnames of 'Mir', 'Sayed', 'Shaikh', 'Khan' and

'Shah'.¹ Previously, the inhabitants of all three wards used to observe Muharram. But nowadays, members of the North ward do not observe it. It was observed that various sub-groups of the Muslims have maintained some sort of social distinction among themselves. The Mir (Sayed) of this particular village is respected and treated as superior by the rest of the community. This particular family observes certain restrictions in respect of occupations. Members do not plough land themselves. They think that ploughing is derogatory to their status. According to the social status of these sub-groups, the next in importance are the Shaikhs, followed by the Khaus. The Shahs are regarded as an inferior group. As such, there is no connubial relationship between this group and other groups of Muslims living here. But very recently, this attitude has changed, and a number of inter-group marriages has taken place. Even in respect of commensal affairs, the female members of the superior groups maintain some restrictions, though commensal demarcation is totally absent amongst the male members.

Table 2 describes in detail the distribution of the various sub-groups of the Muslims of this particular village. It has been ascertained by investigation that no conversion to Islam has taken place here during the last 50 years.

TABLE 2
Distribution of sub-groups in the wards

Sub-groups	West ward	Nazir ward	North ward	Total
Mir (Sayed)	2	2	—	4
Shaikh	15	13	20	48
Khan	1	14	7	22
Shah	8	8	2	18
Total	26	37	29	92

The first settlers of this village came here during the Mughal reign as military officers. Later on, some came from Murshidabad in Bengal, Bihar and other places like Hyderabad. They established relationships with the Muslims living in this village. The present generation speaks Bengali when speaking with outsiders ; while amongst themselves they use in many cases a distorted Urdu.

Occupations

Table 3 describes the details of occupations of the village.

TABLE 3

Occupations

Occupations	West ward	Nazir ward	North ward	Total
Agriculture	10	15	10	35
Day labour	4	6	6	16
Cattle trade	—	3	4	7
Trade in poultry and eggs	3	2	1	6
Fishing, selling of fire-wood, Palm-leaf rain-coat making, etc.	2	4	—	6
Cart-making, shoeing of bullocks	—	—	2	2
Meat shop	2	—	—	2
Tailoring	—	1	—	1
Masonry	—	2	—	2
Music teaching	1	—	—	1
Priesthood/Veterinary doctor	—	1	1	2
Begging	4	3	5	12
Total	26	37	29	92

It has been observed that out of 92 Muslim families, 35 individuals in 3 wards are engaged in agriculture. Only 3 persons have more than 10 acres of land, while most of them possess 1 to 3 acres of cultivable land. Fifteen families have no agricultural land, except the homestead land. Four persons have no homestead land at all. These 35 families cultivate their own fields and grow paddy, jute, etc. as principal crops. Sometimes they also work on land belonging to the Hindus as share-croppers.

In agricultural operations, a few Lodhas and tribal people are also engaged by the Muslims. The employer pays them wages in cash. Muslims are also employed in the houses of Hindus, when they are paid in cash or kind. While working, they are also served breakfast, which consists of puffed rice or *muri*, and noon-day meals composed of rice, curry, etc. No evening meal is served to agricultural labourers employed on daily wages. But when Muslims are employed as seasonal labourers, they are supplied with both the principal meals as well as breakfast. A few Muslims do not accept rice meals in the houses of their Hindu employers, as they think

that this would lead to religious pollution. They say that, at the time of cooking, water may drop on the cooked materials from the conch-shell bangles of the women cooking such food, which married Hindu women generally wear, and which is considered as a religious taboo by Muslims. In such cases, the Muslim labourers demand *sidha*, that is, uncooked food materials from their employers.

Examples of such arrangements are not uncommon. Besides, Muslims do not like to work in the houses of Hadi-SWEEPERS and aboriginal people, like Santals, Mundas and Lodhas of the locality. No Muslim woman was found employed by any family of the Hindus. Muslim maid-servants are not found even to work in the houses of their co-religionists in the same locality.

Cattle trade is an occupation practised by Muslims alone in this tract. They generally negotiate with the sellers, specially the neighbouring agriculturists, who possess cattle, and purchase the animals by cash or exchange. These are then taken to a market for sale. The price is settled with the buyers, and the animals are sold out. For this purpose, they have to go round a number of villages situated in the proximity of their settlement. Cattle trade is pursued by 7 persons in this village.

Trade in poultry, specially fowl, pigeons, etc. and eggs, is another profession of the Muslims alone. Altogether 6 persons were found in this trade, of whom 4 stay in Calcutta for getting supplies. Fishing is practised by 3 persons only, who generally catch fish by rod and line on contract. Sometimes, they are asked to catch fish in the tanks of the owners who pay them in cash or kind. Two persons collect fire-wood from the jungle, or sometimes buy these from the Lodhas living in the neighbourhood of the jungle for sale in the locality. They go hawking to all the houses without discrimination of caste or creed. One Muslim is an expert maker of palm leaf rain-coats used by cultivators during the rainy season. But he also works as a day-labourer at other times.

Two persons from the North ward are engaged in cart-

making, as well as in shoeing cattle. One of them also drives his own cart for hire. He has no agricultural land and works in all seasons of the year. He serves almost all irrespective of caste or creed. Two persons have meat shops near the market.

Tailoring is treated as a traditional or preferred occupation by Muslims; though at present some men from almost all communities have adopted this profession when they get a chance of doing so. One person was found to pursue this profession, which he had adopted 30 years ago. He has migrated to this village from Balasore in the state of Orissa. His sons and other family members also help him.

There is also a mason in this locality who undertakes building of dwelling houses with the assistance of labourers of his own community or tribal coolies. He has no choice in respect of the castes of his clients. He has the requisite implements for masonry work.

There is only one person in the West ward of this village, who makes his living as a music teacher. Sometimes, he is found to work with an opera party on seasonal contract. He has also no choice in the matter of selection of his clients from amongst the communities. One person in the Nazir ward works as a priest. He is called the *Munshi* or religious guide of the locality. He reads passages from the Holy Koran on specific occasions. He also attends the villagers individually, on call, for religious service. He is also consulted by local people in times of difficulty in their daily life. For this, he gets some remuneration in cash or kind. He also attends the mosque every day and conducts the daily prayer early in the morning. He has to observe a few formalities.

One person in the North ward earns his livelihood as a veterinary doctor, though he has no licence or certificate of authority or merit to do this. He is a quack, but he earns well, and visits almost all the houses including Hindu families, when called for. Twelve persons, specially invalid, landless and old, live by begging. Begging is not restricted to their own community alone.

Details of the occupations of the Muslims suggest that agriculture is the main occupation of this community, which is also pursued by the other communities of this locality. They are also found to work in the houses of the neighbouring agricultural communities, except of Hadi-SWEEPERS and the tribal groups. A few occupations are regarded as specifically their own by this community, like cattle trade, trade in fowl and eggs. Tailoring and masonry are also practised by other communities. Practically, they have very little choice in respect of the caste and and creed of their customers or employers, as the case may be.

Monetary transactions with the Hindu money-lending families or with the Co-operative Credit Society are very common. A few Muslims are members of the village Co-operative Credit Society. Muslims also purchase many commodities from the market, and other shops owned by Hindus. They purchase agricultural implements from the local blacksmith and ploughs from the local carpenter. Thus their agricultural economy has established a stable relationship in respect of craft, service and economic co-operation, with the neighbouring villagers. In other professions too, they have to depend on the neighbouring communities, excepting the Munshi or the religious head who depends exclusively on his Muslim clients alone.

Detailed observations made in respect of ritual patterns associated with marriage, birth and death show that they differ strikingly from those of the Hindus. This is due to their religious faith. Muslims generally prefer parallel cousin marriage, and in some cases, cross-cousin marriage also. As a result, marriage takes place, in many cases, within the extended family, or larger familial group. Table 4 gives the details of marriage distances. Marriages within the wards have been classified here as in the same village. Cases of the head of the families have been considered here only. Due to prevalence of extended family in familial setting, extra 4 marriage cases solemnized within the village have not been included in the table.

TABLE 4

Marriage within and outside the village

Wards	No. of families	Within the village	Outside the village
West Mahalla	26	12	14
Nazir Mahalla	37	28	9
North Mahalla	29	23	6
Total	92	63	29

From the above table, it will be observed that 63 marriages have already taken place within the village (within the same ward, as well as in other wards of the village); and the remaining 29 cases have been solemnized outside the village. Such villages are Kesiari (9 miles), Benapur (6 miles), Khargpur (14 miles), Bhagwanpur (18 miles), and Nayagram (13 miles).

Marriage negotiations are generally conducted by family members. But in one case, it was conducted by a non-Muslim. The marriage negotiation of Nader, son of Abdul Rashid, was conducted by Rakhal Das of the same village with the daughter of Md. Mamataz of Khargpur.

Women are more interested in finalizing the marriage contract. They visit the house of the bridegroom in a group to satisfy themselves with the selection. The wedding feast is an important element of the marriage ceremony. Even poor persons of the village have to arrange feasts by taking loans from others. The WASHERMAN and BARBER have roles to play in the marriage ceremony. Generally, dates are fixed according to the convenience of the parties concerned, and the ceremony takes place in the morning. The Munshi or religious head of the community, conducts the ceremony, when passages from the Holy Koran are read. A lawyer or legal adviser or officer-in-charge of marriage contracts also attends, and villagers, both male and female, serve as witnesses. In many cases, provision for divorce is mentioned, and a security amount, known as *Den Mohar* is fixed on that day. If divorce is sought, the amount is paid by the divorce seeker to the other party. The Munshi or Maulvi takes the bridegroom to the mosque or a

sacred tomb in the village for solemnization of the marriage. If marriage takes place before the bride has attained puberty, the bride resides in her parent's home, and after the first menstruation, is taken to her husband's family. The WASHHERMAN, Purna Sit, and the BARBER, Naba Manna, render services in the wedding ceremonies, for which they are paid in cash and kind. But they do not take any meal there. The foster-mother belonging to the Hadi-SWEEPER caste, is also invited during marriage and she is paid in cash and given *sidha*, that is, raw food articles.

As the Hindus live side by side with the Muslims, they are also invited on many occasions ; particularly, if they have any monetary relations with the former. There are a few cases in which Hindus have been invited, and even participated in the wedding ceremony. Rakhal Das and Sudhir Guria, (Hindus) both being very influential men in the village, are generally invited in most wedding ceremonies, though they do not render any ritual service as the WASHHERMAN, BARBER and Hadi-SWEEPER do.

Just before the wedding procession of Nader started, almost all the Hindus of the village were offered sweets. In this particular marriage, other Hindu friends of the family were also invited, and they attended as artificial or ceremonial kin. The wife of Dukha, a CONFECTIONER by caste of this village, was ceremonially invited, as she was the ceremonial sister of Nader. She presented Rs. 4 in cash. The wife of Kali Jana of the same village had accepted Nader as her ceremonial son. Consequently, Mrs. Jana was invited and she also presented Rs. 2 on the occasion. After the marriage, a wedding feast was given to the Muslims of the village living in the three wards, and a few Hindus were also invited to it. The cooking for Hindu guests was done by Hindus, and all the utensils were also brought from Hindu neighbours. Only wheaten pancakes (*luchi*) fried in clarified butter, with vegetable curry and sweets, and not rice, were offered to the Hindu guests. In a wedding ceremony of Shambhunnesa, a ceremonial friend of Mrs. Nihar Guria, wife of Sudhir Guria, both Mr. and Mrs. Guria were invited. She sent presents of a costly *sari* (cloth)

and 2 kg. of sweets through a BARBER. The BARBER was paid by Shambhunnesa in cash for his services, and was offered a good plate of sweets. In another case, during the marriage ceremony of Nizamuddin's son, Sudhir Guria was invited. As is usually done by him, he presented a piece of, costly *dhoti*, 2 kg. of sweets, through the village BARBER. Seven days after the marriage ceremony, as a counter presentation, Nizamuddin sent a *sidha*, consisting of 5 kg. of fine rice, pulses and vegetables, and a big fish weighing 3 kg., to him through the BARBER. This type of reciprocity is not uncommon amongst the villagers, though their religious faiths are different.

There is a prevalent custom among Muslims that a pregnant woman should be given a hearty feast, with presentation of *sari*, etc. This is also a common custom among the Hindus of the locality. Specially, when one is in the seventh month or ninth month of pregnancy, such a feast is given and presents are frequently made to her by relatives. In a few cases, this has been recorded.

Hadi-SWEEPER women of this village attend the mother during child-birth, and cut the umbilical cord of the new-born. Such women are treated as foster mothers, and attend the newly born babies for a few days.

Pregnant women of this village, specially belonging to the Muslim community, are offered a piece of twisted black thread to tie round their waist to ward off the influence of evil spirits. This is generally given by the mother of a man named Golam Ali of this village. For this, she does not take any payment.

On the 7th day after delivery, the BARBER of the village attends the mother and pares off her nails. The head of the new-born baby is also shaved. The WASHERMAN of the village takes all the unclean cloths for washing for ritual purification. On this day, a name is also given to the baby. *Milad* or *Maulad*, which describes the life and activities of the Prophet Mohammed, is read by the Munshi or religious head, on this occasion. A well-to-do person of the community generally offers a hearty feast to his

relatives. Some friends and guests also make presents of new garments etc. to the new-born baby.

The same purificatory ceremony is repeated on the 21st day, as well as on the 40th day. After that, the mother becomes ritually pure, and can perform all household work, including cooking in the kitchen for members of the family. But this type of rigid observance is not followed by all Muslims. Generally, after the ceremonial purificatory rites, the woman is allowed to do domestic work, if she is fit to do so.

Muslims observe a few ceremonies after child-birth. Girls have to pierce their noses and the boys have to be circumcised when they are from 8 to 12 years of age. An expert Khalifa does these services, and is duly remunerated. The Munshi also visits the house during the ceremony and villagers are given a feast. Selected passages from the Holy Koran are read on the occasion.

Sometimes, the first rice-eating ceremony is performed by the head of the family, when the Munshi offers *sinni* or consecrated sweets to the baby on a Friday. A well-to-do person arranges a feast for the villagers on such an occasion.

All these rituals are exclusively observed in accordance with Muslim religious customs. As such, other communities are not invited to them.

Between October 1962 and September 1963, the following cases were reported in connexion with the first rice-eating ceremony of babies. All these babies were brought to the mosque and a *maulad* arranged.

TABLE 5

Description of maulad on first rice-eating day (1962-63)

Wards	Head of the family	Son/Daughter	Type of offering
West	Abbas Ali	Salimaunesa	Sweetmeat
Nazir	Sk. Nekimuddin	Sakina	,,
	Abdul Khalek	Masbut Ali	,,
	Aymat Ali Khan	Ali Mohammed	,,
	Raji Khan	Huri	,,
	Nader Ali	Zakir Ali	,,
North	Based	Neiyara Khatun	,,
	Ebrahim	Bizia Khatun	,,

Burial is the customary method of disposal of the dead among the Muslims. No outsider participates in it. Generally the dead body is placed north-south, the head being laid northward. The two legs are kept close together. The dead body is bathed clean, and a variety of perfumes is sprinkled, according to the means of the family concerned. Generally, a new piece of cloth is purchased and the dead body is covered with it. Then it is placed in a coffin and taken to the graveyard. A prayer is held at the burial ground, when the members of the funeral party stand filed in three different rows. Then the dead body is interred in the grave, with the head remaining northward and the face turned west. The Muslims of the particular village observe no death pollution.

Table 6 presents the nature of adopted relationship between the Muslim population of this locality and their neighbours.

TABLE 6
Cases of ceremonial kinship (three wards)

Name of the individual	Sex	Type of relation	Community/Caste	Sex	Village
Ahmad	M	Friend	Sadgop	M	Kuchli
Mosabkhan	M	Uncle	BARBER	M	Handla
Based	M	Daughter	OILMAN	F	Kuchli
Ohab	M	Son	Muslim	F	Same village
Sikandar	M	Brother	BLACKSMITH	M	"
Samsuddin	M	Mother	Muslim	F	"
Sambhunnesa	F	Friend	OILMAN	F	"
Rashid	M	Daughter	CONFECTIONER	F	"
Ramjurara	F	Friend	Sadgop	F	Masuria
Ramjurara	F	Son	Sadgop	M	Khursi

These relations were solemnized on various occasions. Afterwards, mutual presents were made on specific occasions. The villages of the ceremonial kin are in the same Police Station, and within a radius of 4 miles. Five persons, with such relationships, belong to the same village. Out of 10 such relations, 8 Muslims have relationship with Hindus. It is to be noted here that these Hindu ceremonial kin do not take cooked food in the houses of the Muslims.

Diseases and other calamities often visit the village.

The villagers attribute these to supernatural forces, as well as to other causes. A few cases for a particular year are given in the following table to convey a rough idea about the nature of the treatment.

TABLE 7
Diseases and their treatment

Name	Disease	Mode of treatment
Hansideen	Menstruation trouble	Witch-doctor, talisman.
Maidon	Dyspepsia	do.
Dulanessa	Anaemia	Allopath, Dr. P. Ghosh.
Ohab	Stomach trouble	Quack-allopath, Sri Gati Kungar.
Hamidunnessa	„	Ayurvedic physician.
Tasunnessa	„	Quack-allopath, Sri Gati Kungar.
Ahmed	Fever	do.
Nafimuddin	Fracture	Ayurvedic physician of Asanda and vow to offer sweets to the mosque.
Sk. Mohammed	Brain complaint	Maulad in mosque.
Rasheed Ali	Stomach trouble	Quack-allopath and doctor from the hospital.
Mehar Ali	Sterility	Talisman by the Munshi of the village.
Based	Chronic stomach trouble	Mollah from Howrah's magical 'pulf'.
Ohab	For the general health of his son	Talisman by a Mollah of Mayna P. S.
Sikander	Defective leg	Village Mollah, talisman.
Ebrahim	For the general health of his son.	do.
Sk. Salem	Sterility	Talisman from Goddess Brahmāni.

It will be seen from the above table that they depend on the Munshi or Molla, the religious guide of the village, for treatment of diseases and warding off crises. The latter generally prescribes magical talismans to ward off ill luck, or to bring good luck to the affected. One of them was found to depend on the mysterious powers of Brahmāni. Many of them also depend on quack-doctors, and in rare cases, they go to modern medical practitioners when they can afford to do so.

Political Relationships

The three wards have different officials. The head of a ward's political organization is called Mahaldar. This post is supposed to be a hereditary one. The ablest eldest son of the Mahaldar succeeds him in the post. Besides the headman or Mahaldar, there are a few elders, who are known as *Bhāla Bhāi*,* that is, 'good brother' or (aristocratic) citizen or councillor. All the villagers are not technically 'good brothers'. Hence, they do not hold the offices of the panchayat. But the number of *Bhāla Bhāis* differs from ward to ward. The next important official of the village's political organization is designated as *Piādā* or messenger, or bailiff. The post of the village messenger is not hereditary. The elders select or discharge a man so appointed, when they feel the necessity.

Table 8 gives details of the political organization of the 3 wards of this village. The traditional political organization has nothing to do with the newly organized Gram Sabha, elected on the basis of adult franchise, under the present constitution.

TABLE 8

Traditional political organization of the village

Name of the official	West ward	Nazir ward	North ward
Mahaladar (Headman)	Sk. Nezamuddin	Sk. Kabiruddin	Sk. Abdul Mebub,
Bhāla Bhāi (Good brother or councillor)	Sk. Golam Ali	Sk. Nader Ali	Rahman Ali Khan
	Sk. Saidul	Nekimuddin Shah	Sk. Oyayed Ali
	Sk. Pirjan	Barkat Ali Khan	Sk. Basat
Piādā (Village messenger)	Sk. Sahadat	Sk. Mohammed	Sk. Sekabat Ali

These organizations mainly deal with local problems of the wards in cases of specific complaints or information. These are done exclusively for their own community members. The headman is paid a royalty, specially during any ceremonial feast. His family is entitled to get an extra share of food articles made in offerings. As subscription, he has to pay double the amount donated by the common villagers.

Cases dealt with are mainly petty thefts, quarrels in respect of damages done to property by cattle, breach of social

* The same term is also in use in Orissa. See *Data on Caste* published by the Anthropological Survey of India, (1960), Memoir No. 7, p. 12.

conventions or traditional customs, sexual offences and cases of divorce, etc. Once A of Nazir ward entered into the house of B and stole a few ornaments after breaking open a box. After a few days this was detected, and A lodged a complaint to the panchayat of Nazir ward. The Mahaldar directed the messenger to inform his councillors, i.e. Bhāla Bhāis, as well as, Chota Bhāis, or rest of the villagers. The panchayat imposed a fine of Rs. 5 on B, who admitted his guilt. The amount was kept by the Mahaldar, and was later spent in a public festival and for the school.

There occurred a few cases in the West ward, where a few persons were fined by the village council for drunkenness.

Once in the North ward of this village, Sk. A. H. beat his wife. This was reported to her brother, who, in return, beat seriously Sk. A. H. The latter complained to the village council, when the elders fined the brother-in-law who paid it in cash to the headman.

Once the bullocks of Kaysar Khan of the North ward strayed into the garden of Rahman Khan, who lodged a complaint against Kaysar at the panchayat. The village council fined Kaysar for his carelessness.

Once a widow (E) of the North ward offered a goat for sacrifice (*Korbāni*). According to the traditional custom, two-thirds of the meat was to be given to the headman for distribution to the villagers. But she did not do so. She, of her own accord, distributed it to the poor men of the village. As such, the village elders became offended and fined her. In the alternative, the council could have ostracized her. Affairs of this type are generally discussed in the village council.

Very recently, the Muslims of this locality have organized a broader type of federation amongst the community members only, consisting of a few Muslim villages. The name of this federation is 'Kasba-Asanda Muslim Peace Committee', which consists of villages and wards like Kasba with its three wards, Ragrui, Bengda, Kasba Asanda and Takanda. They

have one president, a secretary, a treasurer and a messenger. These 7 units, including the 3 wards of Kasba Narayangarh, send 3 representatives from each unit to the council, and discuss many inter-ward disputes for solution. Many prejudices and social disabilities are also discussed during such meetings. They are now trying to re-organize the community on a sectarian basis. Regular notices are served on the persons involved and the Peace Committee sits conveniently and takes decisions on the above problems.

When there is any trouble or conflict between a Hindu and a Muslim, the councils of these three wards sit jointly with the headmen of the Hindu wards for a decision. Such cases are not rare.

Once there was a quarrel between a Hadi-SWEEPER and a Muslim, when the village elders sat jointly at Brahmāni. The group consisted of Abdul Mahbub, Sk. Basat (Muslims), Jati Chakravortty, Sarbananda Misra, Byomkesh Chakravortty (Brahman), Sudhir Guria (OILMAN), and Suresh Kotal (Lodha). The council found the Hadi guilty, and fined him Rs. 60, which was paid by him to the village council by selling a cow. This was spent for the development of the village primary school.

Once, a few goats of Kabal Khan (Muslim) damaged the crops of Mrs. Suniti Rana (Hindu), who lodged a complaint against Kabal with the council. The council consisting of a few Muslim elders and two Hindus, namely, Sudhir Guria and Pitambar Rana sat together to settle the case. Kabal Khan admitted his fault and apologized for this. The elders pardoned him.

In this way, petty disputes are always discussed, sometimes exclusively by the Muslims and sometimes jointly with the Hindus.

Recently, the elected village council has replaced the Peace Committee, its members being both Hindu and Muslim. Kasba Narayangarh Gram Sabha consists of a number of villages, on the basis of their population. Both Muslims and

Hindus of this village have been returned in the election. Nine members have been elected ; their names are given below.

Sri Sudhir Chandra Guria (Hindu)—Adhyaksha		
		or Chairman
Md. Aimat Ali Khan (Muslim)—Upadhyaksha		
		or Deputy-Chairman
Sri Binoy Krishna Tiwari (Hindu)—Member		
Sri Kalipada Saha	”	”
Sri Ajit Kumar Mallik	”	”
Sri Amulya Charan Das	”	”
Sk. Pirjan	(Muslim)	”
Sk. Basat	”	”
Sk. Nejam	”	”

The Gram Sabha formally began to function after the election.

Interesting cases have recently been decided by the new village council. In one case, a woman of the Sadgop caste from a distant village had liaison with a Muslim youth of this village ; as a result of which, she had to leave her own family and now stays with the particular young man. In another case, a Hadi was found to be in intrigue with a Muslim woman. This was considered an offence by the community members and the village council, consisting of both Hindus and Muslims, fined him Rs. 250, which was paid by him. These are very rare and exceptional cases. It is interesting that both these cases were not treated from the communal point of view, but were regarded as personal.

Religious Life

The life of the Muslims is largely regulated by religion. The Munshi or Mollah acts as the ritual chief of the village. An adult Muslim is advised to pray to Allah at least five times a day. There are other rules in connexion with the holding of prayers. A few mass-prayers are held, specially on each Friday. The Munshi leads the mass-prayer.

In many prayers, sweetmeat is offered for various reasons after a reading of passages from the life of the Prophet Mohammed. The consecrated food is called *sinni*. This is generally done on the first rice-feeding day, on the first day of ceremonial new-rice eating, after recovery from disease, on fulfilment of vows, recovery of a missing cow, etc. Sometimes, this is also held on an individual basis and the Munshi is requested to attend the ceremony in the house of the man. He is also remunerated according to the economic condition of the individual concerned. Besides these, there are a few places like the tombs of some saints or religious or pious men where *sinni* is also offered in fulfilment of a vow.

Animals, like cows, goats, etc. are also sacrificed on special occasions, communally, as well as individually. According to the tradition of this village, $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the meat of the sacrificed animal is given back to the individuals who offer the sacrifice, the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ rd being sent to the headman, who distributes these equally to all the villagers of the same community.

It has been stated earlier that there is one mosque in this village which was constructed during the reign of Shah Suja, when he was governor of Bengal. Villagers from three wards assemble there daily, specially on Fridays, and all other festival days and holidays. Abdul Ohab works as Munshi or religious preceptor. Besides, Md. Peer Saheb, Noor Mohammed, a Khalifa of high spiritual attainment from the Howrah District, visits the village annually, and guides the villagers in their spiritual and religious life. He is assisted by some Maulvis, who also prescribe some talismans during epidemics or to ward off evil spirits.

In this village, there is a place known as 'Majar of the Old Peer' or the tomb of a saint. Many terracotta horses of miniature size are offered to him, after fulfilment of certain vows, by individuals, to ward off diseases or calamities. Hindus also offer *sinni* to him. This 'Old Peer' is credited with powers to promote childrens' welfare. In the case of certain diseases, specially when babies cry

constantly and become exhausted, vows are made by the parents to offer *sinni* at the shrine. In most cases, the baby is relieved and the vows are kept in due time. One Byomkesh Chakravortty, the priest of the famous Brahmāni temple, offered *sinni* several times on such occasions at this sacred tomb. Hindus from outside the village also come to visit the place on specific occasions.

There is another important tomb in this village, known as 'Emam of Ranajit Shah', the caretaker of which is Niamat Ali Khan. A few acres of rent-free land were endowed for its maintenance during the Mughal administration. 'Sada Lesa Saheb' is another important place in the village, where three large stone slabs are placed horizontally. Terracotta horses are also offered here on specific occasions, and *sinni* as well as fowl are offered to him after prayers have been granted.

A few cases have been reported during 1962-63, in which, the Mollah was invited to read selected passages from the Holy Koran in the houses of the villagers. He was given some cash for such service. Table 9 gives the particulars with causes, for such invitation.

TABLE 9

Reading of selected passages from the Holy Koran (family basis)

Ward	Name	Cause
West Nazir	Sk. Saidul	Recovery from illness
	Barkat Ali Khan	Token of vow for the cure of his son's disease,
North	Sk. Musha	For the salvation of the soul of his departed young daughter,
	Abdul Mahbub	To cure the disease of his only son.
	Ebrahim	do.
	Kaesar	After having got a son.
	Mahmud	After his son's success in school examination,
	Abdus Sattar	For recovery from an accident (dog-bite).

Table 10 gives the particulars of offering of *sinni* (sweets and others), and *korbani* (animal sacrifice) at the mosque, during the same period.

TABLE 10

Particulars of offerings (sweets and animal sacrifice)

Ward	Name	Type	Cause
West	Sk. Saidul	(a) Porridge of new rice.	Ceremonial first eating of new rice.
		(b) Bullock sacrifice.	Annual custom.
	Sk. Golam Ali	Porridge of new rice.	Ceremonial first eating of new rice.
Nazir	Kabiruddin	"	"
	Mekinuddin Shah (a)	"	"
		(b) Bullock sacrifice.	Annual custom of Id-uz-zuha.
	Barkat Ali Khan	(a) Porridge of new rice.	Ceremonial first eating of new rice.
		(b) Bullock sacrifice.	Annual vow on Id-uz-zuha.
	Daman Khan	"	"
North	Abdul Mahmud	Porridge of new rice.	Ceremonial first eating of new rice.
	Abdul Based	"	"
	Abdul Sikandar	(a) "	"
		(b) Bullock sacrifice.	Annual custom on Id-uz-zuha.
	Keramat Ali	Porridge of new rice.	Ceremonial first eating of new rice.
	Ramjan Ali	(a) "	"
		(b) Bullock sacrifice.	Annual custom on Id-uz-zuha.

Muslim festivals are observed throughout the year and these have direct connexion with their religious beliefs. Only important festivals are observed by the Muslims of this village.

All the villagers participate in these, except in the Muharrum. The festivals observed by them are as follows :—

TABLE 11

Details of the festivals, purposes and modes of observance

Sab-e-qard	To earn merit	Reading from the passages from Holy Koran and gifts to the poor.
Id-ul-Fitr	„	Puritan life without food in day time for a month.
Id-uz-Zuha (Bakrid)	„	Animal sacrifice after prayer.
Muharrum	To commemorate the tragic death of Hussain and Hassan	Tomb (<i>tazia</i>) is prepared and mock fighting etc. are done.
Fateh-a-duaz-Daham	Birthday of Prophet Mohammed	Reading of passages from the Holy Koran.
Sab-e-Barat	To earn merit	Gift to the poor.

There is very little scope for the Hindus to participate in these festivals on religious grounds. During the Muharrum, ten days prior to the actual celebration, the villagers, except in one ward, collect subscriptions. Bamboo frame-works are prepared resembling a tomb and known as *tazia*, which are then covered with coloured paper. Hassan and Hussain, the grandsons of the Prophet Mohammed, died in battle. So the participants observe this day by staging mock fights, etc. Most of the Sunnis do not observe this festival. One Maulvi, Noor Mohammed from Howrah, who often visits this place, has convinced a group of people of this village, not to participate in it. As a result, only villagers of two wards hold this festival. With the *tazia*, the participants visit the houses of the Hindus who contribute to the party, whatever they can, either in cash or in kind. This amount is used for meeting the expenses of the festival.

Observations

As we ponder over the interaction between the Muslims and Hindus of Kasba Narayangarh, a few points force themselves on our attention.

In religious and many social affairs, Muslims and Hindus maintain their distinctnesses. Yet, some Hindus participate in

the Muharram festival, make offerings at the shrines of Muslim saints on specific occasions, and so on. Some Muslims, again, seen to make offerings to Hindu deities, perhaps surreptitiously, as this is against the tenets of Islam. A few school-children, join in the celebration of the Saraswati Puja ; but that is more as a social festivity than as sacrament.

The distance between the Hindu and Muslim is thus wide in the religious sphere. But in social relationship, the ties seem to be closer. According to the widely prevalent custom of Midnapur, artificial kinship is often established between one individual and another ; and this quite frequently cuts across lines of caste and even of sect. A Hindu woman may formally establish mother—son relationship with a Muslim ; and then emotional ties of a fairly stable nature are established between the two. When a social ceremony is involved, such artificial relatives exchange presents as in the case of real kin.

There is besides, the service relationship established between Muslim householders and BARBERS, WASHERMEN or Hadi-SWEEPERS.

The economic inter-relationship is, however, more important, and covers a wider field. Some occupations like trade in cattle or poultry may be limited to Muslims in this village ; but the two communities are tied very closely to one another by ties like that between employer—employed, landlord—tenant, and so on. Among Hindus, this leads also to a certain amount of payment made in either cash or kind. This is also noticeable between Muslim and Hindu ; only, in the latter case, certain restrictions are observed with regard to the acceptance of some forms of food or drink.

In other words, distance is maintained between Hindu and Muslim in the same manner as between 'upper' and 'lower' caste Hindus ; only, in the former case, it is more marked, although the practice is of about the same kind.

See Gait, F.A., (1901) : *The Muhammadans of Bengal*, Census of India—1901.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS PURDAH AMONG MUSLIM GIRL STUDENTS OF KANPUR

B. A. KHWAJA

(Received on 10 June 1964)

Abstract : In this paper the author describes the changing attitude of Muslim girl students towards purdah. She is of opinion that the purdah system is likely to disappear with the spread of education and political consciousness among Muslim women.

A study was made of the attitude of educated Muslim girls towards the purdah system in the city of Kanpur. There is only one old Muslim girls' school, namely, Muslim Jubilee Girls' Inter-College in Kanpur where teaching is up to the Intermediate standard.

There were several difficulties in the way of research, the first and foremost being that, to most Muslim girls, the purdah system is connected only with the religion and has nothing to do with education. Religious feelings are so strongly interwoven with the system of purdah that girls could not think of it as a social evil which can be removed with the help of education. Shyness has prevented them from answering many a question, while many girls feel it to be even irreligious to think against purdah.

To the women of to-day, *burka* is an essential part of their dress. And for this reason, rich women prefer the most expensive material for their *burka* and educated girls want it in the most up-to-date form, so that the charm of their dresses under *burka* may remain unspoilt. In this way, to-day the *burka* has taken the place of a fashionable garment.

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It was found that 3 out of 4 Shia girls follow purdah while 23 out of 106 Sunni girls do not observe it. In other words, 25% of Shia and 20% of Sunni girls do not observe purdah. It was also found that the number of girls not observing purdah is higher amongst the business class. Next comes the class of persons in service. The percentages are respectively 11 and 9. It has moreover come to light that the educated daughters of guardians belonging to the income-groups of Rs. 200 p.m. and Rs. 400 p.m., do not observe purdah to the extent of 42 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. This indicates that a larger number of purdah-observing educated girls are from the lower income groups than from higher.

Purdah is more prevalent in the area of Chamanganj. 45% of girls residing in this area observe purdah; while the percentage of purdah-observers is much lower in the areas of Birhana Road, Naya Chowk and Parade. The latter areas are inhabited by educated Muslims, and only 9% of the women in these areas observe purdah.

In school, as the girls reach higher standards, the number of purdah-observers is reduced progressively. In standard x, the percentage of the girls observing and not observing purdah are respectively 68 and 32. The percentage of such girls in standard x is small in comparison with other lower standards. The reason is that the girls grow up in age as they come to standards ix and x. In standard ix the number of non-purdah observers amongst regular students decreases, but the percentage of purdah-observing girls in standard xi is higher than in standard x. It is 93%. The reason is that many girls in standard xi are those who have passed the High School Final examination privately, and have remained all the time at home under purdah. When such girls join standard xi as regular students, they do not give up purdah. But again in standard xii, there is an increase in the percentage of non-purdah observers, and the percentage of purdah-observers comes down to 72. Therefore, in standard xii, there is an increase of 21 per cent of non-purdah observers in comparison with those of standard xi.

But generally amongst regular students, it is found that as they go up to higher standards, the number of purdah-observers goes down, e.g. 50 girls were found observing purdah in standard viii. But in standards ix, x and xi the numbers of the purdah-observers are respectively 22, 5 and 4.

On the basis of the literacy level of the informants' sisters, we tried to ascertain the influence of the family's educational standard and specially that of the informants' sisters on the system of purdah. This showed that as the educational standard rises, the number of purdah-observers decreases. Thirtyone informants' sisters up to High School class were found observing purdah. After that, in the Intermediate, B.A. and M.A. standards, the number of purdah-observers decreases to 22, 13, 3 respectively. In the same way in standard vi, there were 58 purdah-observing girls, which came down to 17 in standard viii and was again reduced to 7 in High School; there being a slight rise of about 17 in the Intermediate classes. The above analysis discloses the fact that as the educational standard increases there is decrease in the number of purdah-observers.

The observance of purdah is also intimately connected with age. 43% of the purdah-observing girls came within the age-group of 13 to 16 years. This is the most tender and decisive period of life and that is why there is a greater tendency towards observing purdah in this period of life. But among very low castes and very high castes, the age-group for starting purdah is from 9 to 12 years amongst the beginners. This age group is placed second. The percentage of girls coming under the age-group of 9 to 12 years is 47. The third group is formed by girls who start observing purdah from the age of 17 to 20. Only 4% of the girls under 9 years of age observe purdah. From these figures it can easily be concluded that the number of purdah-observing girls is higher in the age-group of 9 to 16 years. It slowly decreases as they reach the age of 20 and the purdah is rare amongst those girl students who have crossed 20 years.

From the information gathered on the point of the relation of purdah to religion, it is clear that 83.3% of purdah-observers

are of firm opinion that purdah is deeply connected with religion because it is enjoined in the scriptures. Against this, 7.3% think purdah has nothing to do with religion, while 9.4% have nothing to say on this point.

In the opinion of 27% girls, purdah is a great hindrance in higher and specialized education. In other words, education has modernized their way of thinking. 89.9% of girls are against the system of purdah and 88.5% are of the opinion that purdah is harmful to health. Moreover, 37.2% of the girls are of the opinion that there should be no purdah under present conditions of living. But even in this far advanced modern age, 62% of the girls are in favour of purdah ; out of whom 28.18% think it necessary from the religious point of view, while 20% regard it as a symbol of slavery. Only this much can be said that, on account of the spread of education, the thoughts on the point of purdah system are changing for the better ; but the progress is very slow.

If we take the ratio of the girls sticking to purdah by choice without thinking of it as a religious necessity and that of girls observing purdah simply by social force, it will come to 50%. One can hope that the girls who come under this category will slowly give up purdah as they come progressively under the influence of education. But to think that the remaining 50% of them, with whom purdah is a religious duty, will ever give it up is like hoping against hope.

In India, after independence, even women have rights equal to those of men in all spheres of life. 33.6% of the girls were politically awakened and they are aware of their fundamental rights. According to 31% of purdah-observing girls, rights can be enjoyed even by remaining in purdah. 14% of non-purdah observing girls too have the same view. This shows that many Muslim girls do not seem to have any knowledge of their fundamental rights. 33.6% of the purdah-observing girls look down upon those who do not observe purdah, while 36.36% of them suffer from inferiority complex and 30% have none of these complexes.

According to 55%, women's health is ruined on account of purdah and the women suffer from many diseases, such as

tuberculosis etc., which are the direct result of their not getting fresh air and sunlight. On the contrary, 39% are of the opinion that the question of bad health does not arise at all, as it is religious to observe purdah, while 5.55% have no opinion on this question.

Summary

It is our observation that purdah is more prevalent amongst the Shias. On the basis of income, the highest number of girls observing purdah is found in families where the father's income is less than Rs. 200 p.m. and the number of purdah-observing girls is smallest in the class of people where the father's monthly income is about Rs. 400. From the statistics culled on the basis of education, it is learnt that the spread of education has been responsible for the removal of purdah. On the basis of age, it is found that the observance of purdah is at its highest in the age-group 13 to 16. Under the impact of education, girls have been feeling that it is impossible to receive higher and specialized education by remaining under purdah. In the past, it was believed that purdah is connected with religion. But in modern times, fewer girls think so. Educated Muslim girls have begun to look upon purdah as a symbol of slavery. The Muslim girls of the present age do not want to remain under purdah and also remain totally subordinate to men. In a democratic society, it is not possible to enjoy one's rights by remaining in purdah. In modern times, purdah is considered to be the chief cause of the poor health of women. During the present national emergency, Muslim girls are extremely anxious to help the nation. Casting off purdah, they want to join the N.C.C. † and such other service organizations; so it is clear that educated girls are becoming progressively less interested in purdah. It seems that with the spread of education amongst the Muslim girls the custom of purdah will disappear by and by.

† N.C.C. or the National Cadet Corps.

THE FORT DWELLERS

UMA GUHA

(*Received on 21 November 1964*)

Abstract : The paper describes the Kottai Pillaimars, a community of 64 people, who live behind the mud walls of the thousand-year-old Srivaikuntam Fort. The community is endogamous. Widow marriage is prohibited and women are not allowed to see any men except their close relatives. At present there is one marriageable woman among eight men.

A tiny community consisting of 64 persons, is fighting a desperate battle—the battle for existence—behind the mud walls of the Srivaikuntam Fort. Srivaikuntam or the 'Heaven of Vishnu' is a small town in the district of Tirunelveli. It is about 17 miles from Tiruchchendur, an important port in Madras State. Srivaikuntam town is inhabited by 12,590 persons and the area is 4.50 sq. miles. The whole town is dominated by a Vishnu temple dedicated to Srivaikuntapathiswami.

This town played an important role in the last upsurge of the Paligars or the feudal chiefs of South India against the British in 1807. The temple compound served as a fort for the British Company which held out against the Paligars.

At the northern end of the town, there is mud fort which occupies about 7 acres of land. The mud walls of the fort are 15 feet high. There are four gates on four sides of the fort—north, south, east and west. Of these four gates, the north and south gates are kept open.

This fort is the residence of an interesting but dwindling community of Kottai (fort) Pillaimars, a distinct section of the Vallalans. The fort is a thousand years old. According to tradition, the Kottai Pillaimars were the chamberlains

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of the Pandya kings and had the privilege of crowning them. Once upon a time, one of kings became annoyed with them and wanted to get rid of them. A rival king, reigning near Srivaikuntam, helped them and gave them this fort to live in. The Kottaimars, the original inhabitants of this fort became the slaves of the Kottai Pillaimars. In course of time, the slaves decided to erect stone houses with tiled roofs and built four such houses. In anger, their masters went to Court and obtained a decree against the Kottaimars which restrained them from building pucca houses. An order to demolish the houses was also issued. The Kottaimars were further ordered either to remain within the fort as slaves or leave the place. Most of the Kottaimars preferred to quit. A few Kottaimars who live near the western gate of the fort work as servants of the Kottai Pillaimars, and they are well paid. In spite of the bitterness between the two communities, these Kottaimars still consider themselves as slaves of the Kottai Pillaimars.

There are 18 houses within the fort, of which 3 have been abandoned. There is a Siva temple. The east and west gates of the fort which are kept open for communication, are guarded day and night by the Kottai Pillaimars so that no male intruders can come in. The women folk of the Kottai Pillaimars are never allowed to go outside the fort. They are not even allowed to meet any male persons except their closest relatives.

The women are helped in their household work by the Kottaimar women. When men are required to do the jobs of artisans, masons, washermen etc., only those who have been working hereditarily, are allowed to enter the fort, and as long as these men are there, the Kottai Pillaimar women must remain secluded so that no one may see them.

The Kottai Pillaimars are endogamous. On the occasion of marriage, Pattanam Brahmans, their household priests, are called inside the fort to perform the marriage ceremony. A curtain is placed between the priest and the bride.

When a women dies, her body is wrapped in a sack, especially made for the purpose, carried out thorough the north

gate, which is opened only on this occasion, and taken to the cremation ground nearby.

There is a story prevalent here which illustrates how closely the women are guarded from the contact of men. It is said that long ago, a girl of 5 years managed to climb the mud wall of the fort and peep out to see the unknown world beyond. She was caught and killed outright and her body was thrown out of the fort. After that, a curse seemed to befall the community. No girl baby was born for a long time. Then a saint named Shanmughan Sundraram came and did some *yajna* for the community. The curse was lifted and girls began to be born again. The grave of the saint is in the fort and is regularly worshipped. Most of the men are named after him.

There is the custom of bride price among the Kottai Pillaimars. The bridegroom has to pay about 50 guineas for his bride. A widow cannot marry again. She cannot talk to or see any outsider, not even women. She is kept confined in a room and can meet only the closest possible female relatives.

The community is enormously wealthy. There are 15 families of Kottai Pillaimars and they own 500 acres of wet land and Rs. 5,000,000 in cash. The average income of each family per annum is Rs. 18,666. The Kottai Pillaimars own land in Srivaikuntam and the neighbouring villages where they possess large granaries, outhouses etc. They are also money-lenders.

Only a few of the Kottai Pillaimar men are educated. The women are more or less illiterate. But recently, the Madras Government have employed a lady teacher who visits the Kottai Pillaimar women to educate them. Until recent times, the Kottai Pillaimars had resisted all attempts at modernization. But in November, 1962, we found two of the houses electrified with the help of dynamos. Most of the houses have mosaic floors, chandeliers, big oil paintings, full-sized English mirrors, big bedsteads, decorated with carvings, beads and glasses, chiming clocks, radios, etc.

It is interesting to note that though the women never go outside the fort, they seem to be acquainted with the latest

modes in dress and jewellery. The men are responsible for this. They go out regularly and bring in the latest fashion in clothes and ornaments. The lady teacher is also a vehicle for the propagation of fashion. The health of the people is good.

An allowance of Rs. 63.64 is paid annually by the Madras Government for the upkeep of the fort and the amount is paid to the Committee of 3 male members of the fort. Community disputes are also settled by this Committee.

The Kottai Pillaimars believe that originally they were 400 in number. According to the Census Report of 1911, there were 52 males and 42 females; 'of these 42 women, 17 are widows. Of 18 married women, at least 6 are past child-bearing age.'

According to our findings in 1962, the total population consists of 34 males and 30 females, altogether 64 persons. There are 15 families consisting of 6 joint and 9 single families. Out of the latter, two are widowers. Of the 34 men, 16 are married, 2 are widowers, 6 are unmarried and 10 are children up to 12 years of age. The 30 women consist of 16 married women, 5 widows, 1 unmarried girl of 18 years and 8 children up to 12 years of age. Among the 16 married women, 6 are past child-bearing age and, again, of these 6 women, 3 are sterile.

The Kottai Pillaimar women marry after menarche. The average age at menarche is 14.50 years and the average age at marriage is 14.80 years. The average age at consummation is 14.86 years and the average age at first child-birth is 20.36 years. There is a considerable gap of 4.74 years in average, before a child is conceived. There is a menstrual taboo of 3 days when the husband and wife cannot have coitus. There is no pre- or post-partum coital taboos.

At present, there is only one marriageable girl within the whole community of Kottai Pillaimars. But she cannot be married. The young man with whom marriage had been settled, died, and, secondly, one of her uncles left the fort to marry a woman of another caste. Though there is a tremendous dearth of women, no one likes to marry such an inauspicious girl.

On the other hand, there are 6 unmarried men and 2 widowers ready for marriage. They must wait until the 8 girls grow up and attain maturity. The Kottai Pillaimars know that they are fighting a losing battle. In spite of material prosperity, they are not happy. The community seems to labour under a burden of gloom. They seldom laugh. This is especially true of the women. Quite a few of the adult women suffer from mental aberrations. The joy of life is absent even among children. The fort looks grim and forlorn.

But indeed it is a remarkable phenomenon, and an example of dogged determination to exist. The community has managed to survive up to the present day, and in the course of half a century, its number has dwindled from 94 to 64*.

* While writing the article, news came that one of the 6 unmarried men has died very recently.

A NOTE ON THE PALIYAS OF WEST DINAJPUR

TARASISH MUKHOPADHYAY

(Received on 7 June 1965)

Abstract : The author briefly describes some of the ethnographic characteristics of the Paliya caste of West Bengal. They are a mongoloid people who have practically found a place in the local caste system.

Introduction

THIS study of the Paliyas was undertaken in a village named Kunore, located about 6 miles south-west of Kaliyaganj in West Dinajpur District. The village is inhabited by 14 Paliya families, along with a number of other castes. The investigation was carried out in January, 1963.

History and Origin of the Paliyas

There is no literature which fully describes the origin, physical features, occupation and socio-economic condition of the Paliyas. Physically, they show certain mongoloid characters with short stature, straight hair, epicanthic fold and rounded contour. But these observations have got to be confirmed by proper investigation.

The *Eastern Bengal District Gazetteer of Dinajpur* (1912) considers them as belonging to a semi-Hindu caste. The census of 1951, West Bengal, recorded them as a Scheduled Caste coming originally from Cooch Behar and the neighbouring areas.

About 32 years ago, some Paliyas started a campaign claiming for themselves the name of *Kshatriya Barman* or *Kulin Kshatriya*. This movement was successful to a great

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extent and spread all over the northern part of the then Bengal. Now some of them act as priests for their caste-men and others.

Common Dress and Ornaments

So far as the use of dress and ornament styles are concerned, they yet follow the old tradition and no significant change has taken place. Women use a kind of garment made by joining two pieces of cloth measuring 5'3" and 7'6". The garment is called *do-suti-kapar*. This short clothing just covers the upper part of the body and extends down to the knees. The two ends of the cloth are tied in front and just over the breast. A *feti* or tumpline is worn by Paliya women for carrying children on their back. Here it is interesting to note that for handloom clothing, they depend on the Debasarma or Desiya women who are skilled in weaving the Manipuri varieties of handloom fabrics. For this, the latter employ a special type of loom called *tantjura*. Married women use conch-shell bangles, vermilion and lac-dye or *alta*. Several kinds of silver ornaments are more commonly used than gold ornaments.

Marriage Rules and Customs

The Paliyas are an endogamous group. In marriage they do not follow the rigidity of *gotra*, a feature noticeable among some of the other lower castes in Bengal. Cross-cousin marriage is allowed with a girl who is the groom's MoBrDa or FaSiDa. Again, daughters of WiFaBr, WiMoBr, Wi Fa Si Hu or even the Wi Si can be selected for marriage with one's brother. In all cases, the marriage is settled after comparing the nicknames of the would-be bride and bridegroom. Economic stability of the groom, his age, health and education are primarily taken into consideration. The Paliyas believe that their total number of males exceeds the number of females. So bride-price is common, and it costs a minimum of Rs. 155 to the groom for purchasing the presents that are offered to the bride at the time of marriage. Either a cow, a goat or a chicken is customarily presented to the bride, and the income from the animal becomes her personal property, not her husband's.

Marrying a widow is approved. This is called *nikay*. But the *nikay* form of marriage is not as elaborate as the first marriage. Among the Paliyas, marrying the elder brother's widow (junior levirate) is customary. The widow has, however, free option to marry elsewhere, as she chooses, and the new husband is known as *dangua*. In that case, she gets no share of the property of her deceased husband. However, if the widow has a son or daughter by her previous husband, then the property is given to the child. In no case are the sons or daughters of the *dangua* entitled to their mother's deceased husband's property. The Brahman, the Goswami or the religious preceptor and the BARBER have different duties in a marriage ceremony.

Occupation and Economic Life

The Paliyas claim that their traditional occupation is agriculture. There is also a general tendency to take up an additional calling whenever there is prospect. Thus, they are engaged in various non-agricultural occupations. Some of them extract mustard oil with a special type of oil-press (*ghani gach*) driven by a single bullock with its eyes covered. This is mainly operated by Paliya women.

A small group of Paliyas were also found engaged in manufacturing small-sized decorated earthen pots. These objects are remarkably attractive and their production is restricted to that group only. Both men and women participate in different stages of its manufacture. The basic productive organization is the family. Among the Paliya POTTERS, a woman is allowed to work on the wheel, unlike the Kumbhakars ; and this is a remarkable feature indeed. It is interesting that in this particular type of wheel there is no provision for a hole or groove, to place the rotating stick or *khoncha*. The Paliyas rotate the wheel by pressing the rotating stick against the spoke at a place where it meets the felly. The method of working on the wheel, the implements used for pot-making and even the kiln prove their distinctness.

Again, there are some Paliya families who depend on business. They sell a kind of sweetmeat known as *muria*, *moa* or *matka*. Selling of *muri* or puffed rice is also

common. Never do they sell chapped rice or *chira*, as it is sold by the local Debasarmas. The use of a husking pedal is prohibited among them by custom. So they prepare rice and chapped rice for their own use by means of a mortar and pestle, locally called *cham-gahin* and *udukhal*. Also, they never work on a handloom, as they consider weaving as a lowly occupation. Selling betel leaf or *pān* is not done by them at all, as lime is used for preparing a betel leaf, and lime is made and sold by the caste of Jugi, a lower caste. In the weekly or bi-weekly market, they would not sell tea for the fear of boycott by their caste-men.

Discussion

Here an attempt has been made to present a brief account of the Paliyas of West Dinajpur. One may differ about their origin and caste status. But the Paliyas themselves have gained a respectable position by claiming to be Kshatriyas in the local hierarchy. In spite of their improved status, their dress-styles, ornaments, marriage rules and nature of occupations remain unchanged. They are indeed rigid and traditionalist in outlook. It is interesting that due to the lack of a number of specialist castes in the locality, the Paliyas have taken up a variety of occupations. Similarly, they have a co-operative economic relationship with the Debasarmas and others for certain daily necessities. However, this divergence among the different occupational groups does not in fact stand as a bar against intermarriage. For all practical purposes, the Paliyas consider themselves as belonging to one and the same caste.

THE KHAMPTIS : AN OUTLINE OF THEIR CULTURE

BISWAJIT SEN

(*Received on 30 April 1965*)

Abstract : The Khamptis are an advanced, but comparatively small, immigrant community living in the north-easternmost corner of India. The author gives an outline of their culture, and tries to establish their relationship with the peoples of northern Burma.

THE Khamptis are a small tribe in the Luhit Frontier Division,¹ the easternmost division of the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). This Division is bounded by the Putao District of Northern Burma in the east, by the Siang Frontier Division in the west, by the Tibetan district of Zayul in the north and Tirap Frontier Division in the south. The total area is roughly 9,000 square miles. Originally this Division formed a part of the Sadiya Frontier Tract, an administrative unit on the north-east frontier created in 1919. In 1942, the southern part of the Sadiya Frontier Tract was constituted into Tirap Frontier Tract. In 1948, the remaining portion of the original Sadiya Frontier Tract was divided into Mishmi Hills and Abor Hills. The Mishmi Hills area was later named as the Luhit Frontier Division, when in 1954 the entire administrative set-up of NEFA was reorganized and the present frontier tracts were formed.

The Khamptis are distributed in seven villages, namely, Chowkham, Memong, Barpathar, Mime, Kherem, M'Pong and Man Khao within the Namsai Subdivision. The Khamptis are more advanced in language, culture and economy than their neighbouring tribes, the Singpho, Miri and Mishmi.²

The topography of the Khampti area is similar to the Assam plains and the climate ranges from sub-tropical to mild

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temperate. The area falls within the maximum rainfall zone of India and records 140"—200" of rain in a year. The villages are intersected by numerous streams and rivers. The land as a whole is fertile and has sufficient water supply.

According to a Khampti legend, they migrated from a 'Place to Gold', (*Kham* means gold and *ti* means spot or place), located at Bor Khampti in Upper Burma. The Khampti legend about the emergence of man is also interesting. The legend is that, in the beginning there was all water. Some earth was placed on a fish's back and god asked a female-fish to give birth to an egg. The egg was cut into two equal halves; one half was placed on the earth and the other half formed the sky. There was also a tree, and from its flower, a pair of human beings came out who produced the rest of mankind.³

It is evident that the Khamptis migrated towards the end of the eighteenth century from the hilly region between the north-eastern extremity of Assam and the Irrawady Valley, called *Hkhampti Long* by the Burmese. They belong to the same stock as the Ahom of Assam. They conquered a place called Tenga Pani⁴ from the Ahom rulers. Due to the pressure of the Singpho migration from farther east, during 1794, the Khamptis penetrated further down into Assam. During 1832-35, a fresh migration of the Khamptis took place, and the British Government, then in power, allowed them to settle in the Namsai area for using them as an effective barrier against further invasion from Burma, which was a continuous source of danger.⁵ In the past, Khamptis were warlike, but at present they are peace-loving and settled agriculturists.

The Khamptis have sharper features than their neighbours.⁶ The present-day Khamptis have dark brown to fair complexion, medium to tall stature, well-built bodies, not highly developed cheek bones and epicanthic folds. There are a number of Khamptis who have fine features.

The Khampti language has been classed in the 'Tai group'.⁷ They have their own script, which has seventeen letters; *Ka, Kha, Yan, Cha, Chha, Yaan, Ta, Tha, Na, Pa, Pha, Ma, Ya, La, Wa, Ha* and *Aa*.

The present Khampti men were white full-sleeved cotton shirt (*siu pajai*), and deep coloured cotton skirt or *loongi*, called *phanoi*; but previously they used to wear tight-fitting coloured jackets. The women wear half-sleeved or full-sleeved white blouses (*siu pajao*), made of cotton or silk and deep coloured skirt (*siu*), made of silk or cotton. The dress as a whole looks like the Burmese dress. Aged men and women wear a white turban on the head. Previously, Khampti men used to keep their hair long and tie them in a knot,⁸ but now they cut it. The women use ornaments made of silver and coloured beads, mostly imported from Burma.

Khampti villages mostly extend along the sides of the streams, and their huts look almost like huts in Upper Burma.⁹ The huts are built on piles and provided with kitchen gardens properly fenced with bamboo or dried branches. Floors are made of wooden planks, walls are made of bamboo-splices, the roofs being thatched with grass or dried leaves. A wooden staircase leads to the balcony which is partly covered. The balcony leads to the actual hut which is partitioned into a number of rooms according to the size of the family.

The Khamptis are mainly agriculturists and practise wet-rice cultivation. The soil is fertile, and irrigation is done by channelling water from the hill-streams. A plough or *thai* (quadrilateral type) is used for tilling the soil; this being similar to the Burmese type and not found anywhere else in NEFA. The plough is drawn by a single animal, usually a bullock. The leveller, *phiu*, is also of the Burmese type and is also drawn by the same animal. Ploughing is done by men-folk, while sowing and harvesting are done by both men and women. If the quantity of grain is small, then grains are husked in a mortar and pestle, *sak khao*; otherwise it is taken to the automatic husking machine run by a hill-stream. In each village, there is more than one such machine owned by individuals to whom a certain quantity of grain is given for hire. In the northern parts of NEFA, the Sherdukpen (Kameng F. D.), and Buddhist Moupas—wrongly called Monbas (Siang F. D.)—have automatic grinding mills which are also run with the help

of running water, but are different in mechanism. The Buddhist groups also have prayer-wheels of different sizes, housed in stone buildings, which are kept revolving by the flow of water. The major crops are paddy (*khapu*), mustard (*hanio*), potato (*man kala*), etc., along with some vegetables, fish and liquor, *thou*, brewed from fermented rice. *Thou* is drunk throughout the day.

Some Khamptis capture elephants during the months of October-March, and some of them mainly depend on that particular occupation. Trained elephants are employed to entrap young and baby elephants. These animals are sold at a high price and some of them fetch about 4,000 rupees. Fishing is done for home consumption and communal fishing is rare. Fishing baskets and traps are made of bamboo and cane, and are similar to the types used in Upper Burma. Previously, they were hunters, as borne out by hunting implements like bow, arrow, *dao*, etc. which again resemble the Burmese types.¹⁰

The Khamptis are good traders. In the past, they used to exchange rice and other vegetables with the people of Burma and Assam for ornaments and household utensils.¹¹ They also traded with the Miri and Mishmi. At present their trade is confined to the neighbouring tribes and the people in the plains of Assam. Khampti women are expert in weaving and handicrafts, while their men are expert in woodwork and metalwork, which is evident from the construction of the monasteries or *chongs*.¹² At present there are some woodworkers, but the art of metalwork is degenerating gradually. Previously it was the duty of the head priest to devote time to woodwork and metalwork, besides his spiritual activities. When J. Butler visited Upper Burma and the Irrawady Valley in 1845-47, he recorded the excellence of Khampti workmanship in metal.¹³

The Khamptis follow tribal endogamy and clan exogamy. Society is of the patriarchal type. Most of the clan names are derived from mythical or historical events. A few of the clan names are: *Namsum*, *Chontan*, *Min*, *Lungking*, *Man Nai*, *Mantao*, *Man Phai*, *Mansai*, *Manje*, *Lung Phong*, *Makat*, etc.

Kinship structure is both descriptive and classificatory, as is evident from the following terms :

Descriptive		Classificatory	
Father	Chao	Father's Elder Sister	Okche
Father's Elder Brother	Pulung Jao	Mother's Elder Sister	Okche
Father's Younger Brother	Aa Jao	Father's Elder Brother	Pulung Jao
Mother	MI	Mother's Elder Brother	Pulung Jao
Mother's Elder Sister	Okche	Mother's Younger Sister	Aje
Mother's Younger Sister	Aje	Father's Younger Sister	Aje

The Kamptis are mainly monogamous, polygamy being uncommon. The married sons, until they are in a position to run their own families, live with the father. The number of joint families is still considerable.¹⁴ Marriage is arranged by a middleman. Marriage by service and by mutual consent, though not popular, are socially recognized. Both the junior type of levirate and sororate are practised. Cross-cousin marriage is in vogue ; the most preferred mate being one's mother's brother's daughter. Divorce is not encouraged, but allowed if unavoidable, and adoption of a son is permitted. After the death of the father, all the sons inherit the property equally. In the absence of an actual son, the adopted son inherits, and in his absence, the sons of the deceased person's brothers inherit the property. If a person dies leaving only his female issue, then she inherits the whole property, provided that after her marriage, her husband also stays with her in the same household.

After the death of an old person, the relatives are informed and they come with offerings. The body is carried by male relatives only to the cremation ground for cremation. Previously, the Khamptis used to bury their dead, and over the grave some construction was set up. The dead body of a minor child is usually buried. After cremation or burial, a ceremony (*hip chum*) is observed within seven days, in which a priest is invited to read the holy scriptures. The priest is offered food and drink for his services.

The Khamptis follow the Burmese type of Buddhism. All religious activities centre round the *chong*. The common people have little idea about Buddha or his teachings.

They approach the head priest of the *chong* for religious purposes and do as they are instructed. The head priest plays an important role in all religious activities. Even in social and political life they play an important role, as the village chiefs consult them on controversial questions. The head priest, *Cho solo lung*, is locally known as *Bapu*. Next is the *Chou ki chao*, who has several assistants, *Chousangs*. The fresh students or inmates are novices, known as *Kapia*. The chair of the head priest is not hereditary; even a *kapia* can reach to this position after qualifying himself for the post. The present head priest was admitted as a *kapia* thirty years ago. There are several women devotees, *yasi*, who live outside the *chong* and remain celibate.

Khampti festivals, such as *Mei kusum phai*, *Sarken uanfra*, *Sirni kung kang*, etc., are very colourful and are all observed to celebrate events in the life of the Buddha. All these festivals are observed communally and are held in or around the *chong* compound. All the villagers irrespective of age, sex and status, join in the festivals. Offerings which consist of vegetables, drinks and cereals are placed inside the *chong*. Animal sacrifices are strictly forbidden.

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2. The groups, Khampti, Singpho, Mishmi, Ahom, etc., originally belonged to the western group of the Tai family, inhabitants of China, who finally migrated fanwise down over southern China, the Shan States, Upper Burma, Assam, Thailand, Laos, and Tonkin. Seindenfaden, Erik, *The Thai Peoples*, Bangkok, 1958, p. 9.
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WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS IN GORAKHPUR U. P.

S. M. DUBEY

(*Received on 11 August 1964*)

Abstract : The author distributed interview-schedules to 100 clerks of the Accounts Section of the N. E. Railway Headquarters in Gorakhpur. He has tried to analyse, on the basis of the replies received, how far the interviewees have actually been 'urbanized'.

AS headquarters of this region as well as of the North-Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur occupies an important place among the rapidly growing cities of U. P. ; and a major section of its population consist of people belonging to the lower middle class and engaged in white-collar occupations.

This survey is based on the study of 100 cases, selected on random basis, from among the clerks of the Accounts Section of the North-Eastern Railway. For collection of data, we applied the technique of interview-schedule. The respondents belong to four religions and twentyseven castes.

In this survey, all respondents belong to the income group ranging from Rs. 80 to Rs 300 per month. Salary is the only source of income for 80% respondents, and 20% families of these respondents have more than one avenue of income. In 1963, the average annual income per capita was found to be Rs. 539.76 in contrast to one ranging from Rs.158.88 to 194.07 for the different districts of eastern U. P., as found by the Patel Commission (*Daily Aj*, January 24, 1964).

Out of these respondents, 50% were found living in one room quarters where basic civic amenities are still considered as luxuries. In 83% houses there is no electricity and 23% houses do not have any arrangement for the supply of water, and the

residents of these houses have to depend on public water-taps. There is no water-connexion in 50% houses and 10% respondents are living in such quarters where there is no arrangement for latrines.

Increase in education and urbanization are mainly responsible for occupational changes. 83% respondents have come to the city from villages and only 17% are original inhabitants of this city.

In the generation of respondents' grandfather, only 45% people were literate, and the percentage of literacy rose up to 58% in the generation of father, and in the present generation all respondents are educated, their educational attainment being not less than matriculation.

It is interesting that although the respondents have migrated to the city, yet they have not lost contact with the village, and other members of their families are still engaged in the traditional family occupations.

In spite of liberal education and the impact of city life, these respondents are not free from the traditional pattern of thinking and conservatism. A majority among them are opposed to inter-caste marriage. It is a popular belief among sociologists that urban life is disruptive of the joint family system. But in this survey, a major section of the respondents not only belong to joint families but show a liking and preference for this system. In matters of marriage, sex morals and family planning, their views are orthodox.

Our study shows that 79% respondents belong to joint families and only 21% to nuclear families. Though 21% respondents were found living in nuclear families, only 10% of them have expressed a dislike for the joint family system. There is no marked change in their system of marriage, faith and traditions. The marriages of 95% respondents were settled by their parents, and 90% respondents prefer marriages to be settled in this manner. Only 10% respondents are willing to marry their daughters out of their own caste, and of these respondents none belong to the upper castes. 62%

respondents are acquainted with the methods of family planning, but only 25% of them apply contraceptives.

The way of life of the rest of the respondents is still determined by their rural traditions. Religion, caste and customs are still powerful in determining the behaviour of these respondents. Only 2% respondents may leave their religion, 2% their castes and 16% of them are prepared to leave their occupation, if they are assured of a better standard of life and prosperity. Education and urbanization have not been able to transform their ideas and 60% respondents believe their present condition of life as being the result of deeds in past lives. In moments of frustration, 88% respondents pray for relief and receive solace from prayers.

A definite change is visible in their recreational pattern, and 62% respondents are interested in cinema and 12% respondents were found having their own radio sets.

FINGER-PRINTS OF THE KALITA

RENUKA DAS

BHUBAN M. DAS

(Received on 6 July 1965)

Abstract : 100 Kalita males and 89 Kalita females have been examined with respect to their finger-prints. The finger-print pattern frequencies have been compared with those of the Suri caste and found to be somewhat different.

Introduction

THE Kalita form a very interesting and important caste-population of Assam. The present writers made an attempt to study the physical characters of the Kalita. Both dermatoglyphic and anthropometric data were collected from among them. The analysis of the anthropometric data have already been reported (1965). The present article deals with the finger-prints of the Kalita.

Finger-prints of 100 Kalita males and Kalita females were collected in the months of November and December, 1964, from Rangia and its neighbouring villages. Rangia is situated on the north bank of the Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup in Assam.

The three main finger-patterns, namely, whorls, loops (radial and ulnar) and arches have been identified for classification. The following indices have been calculated from the frequencies of the above three patterns: Dankmeijer's (arch-whorl) index, pattern intensity index and Furuhashi's (whorl-loop) index. The bimanuals have also been constructed to represent the trifold pattern of the finger-prints. Poll's pair group rule has also been applied. Distribution of monomorphic hands has also been found out. The Kalita data have been compared with the available data on another Assamese caste.

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The Data

TABLE 1
Finger-prints of the Kalita (all fingers combined)

		Loop					
		Whorls	Radial	Ulnar	Total	Arches	Unclassified
Male	No.	400	19	537	556	42	2
	%	40.0	1.9	53.7	55.6	4.2	0.2
Female	No.	280	15	575	590	35	5
	%	29.21	1.68	64.60	66.28	3.93	0.55

It appears from Table 1 that in both the sexes of the Kalita, loops occur in much higher percentage than whorls. The females (66.28%) possess more loops than males (55.6%). Conversely, the percentage of whorls is higher among males (40.0%) than among females (29.21%). Radial loops occur in slightly higher percentage in males (1.9%) than in females (1.68%). This is true in the case of arches also.

When the two hands are compared, it is seen that in both hands of the two sexes, loops occur in higher frequency than whorls. Among females, the left hand shows more radial loops than the right one, while in the males both the hands possess radial loops almost in equal frequencies. As regards arches, also, the left hand of the females exhibits a larger number of arches than the right one. The reverse is true in case of males. The majority of the radial loops are found in the IInd digit of both the hands of the two sexes. The same is true in the case of arches also.

TABLE 2

Indices

	Arch-Whorl	Pattern Intensity	Whorl-Loop
Male	10.50	13.60	71.94
Female	13.44	12.47	44.07

The male value of whorl-loop index is much higher than the female. Conversely, arch-whorl index is higher among the females than males. The values of pattern intensity index are almost the same, being slightly higher in males than in females.

On construction of the bimanuars, it is seen that, in the case of males, the highest peak is at 4W6L (14.28%), which is followed by a peak at 1W9L (10.20%). The next highest peak (8.16%) is seen at 7W3L, 2W8L and 10L. On the other hand, the females show the highest peak at 10L (17.85%). It is followed by 3W7L (11.90%), 2W8L (10.71%) and 5W5L (9.52%).

In application of Poll's (1938) method the present data reveal the following results :

Male	Female
$\Sigma P = 0.30$	$\Sigma P = 0.34$
$\Sigma G = 0.32$	$\Sigma G = 0.28$
$D = \Sigma P - \Sigma G$	$D = \Sigma P - \Sigma G$
$= -0.02$ (void)	$= +0.06$ (valid)
$\Sigma P < \Sigma G$	$\Sigma P > \Sigma G$

The pair group rule is valid for females, but void for males.

Among the Kalita, monomorphic hands occur in 25.50% in the males and 26.77% in the females.

TABLE 3

Comparison with another caste (Male)

Caste	No.	Loop			Total	Arches	Author
		Whorl %	Radial %	Ulnar %			
Kalita	100	40.0	1.9	53.7	55.6	4.2	Present study
Suri	113	50.62	2.22	45.73	47.95	1.42	Das & Deka

There exist very little data on finger-prints of the various caste-populations of Assam. Das & Deka (1958) published finger-prints of 113 Suri males. The Suri, who originally constituted a liquor-distilling and selling caste-group, have now taken to agriculture. It appears from Table 3, that among the Kalita, loops occur in higher percentage than whorls, while among the Suri, whorls and loops are found almost in equal frequencies, though the percentage of the former is slightly higher than that of the latter.

In this connexion, it may be mentioned that in respect of

most of the anthropometric characters, the Kalita do not differ significantly from the Suri. The two castes are similar to one another in respect of anthropometric characters (Das & Das 1965). But in respect of the frequency distribution of various finger-print patterns, the two castes, namely, the Kalita and the Suri are not very similar to one another.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Social Change in Tikopia. By Raymond Firth. Pp. 360. 1959. George Allen Unwin Limited. London. 45 shillings.

This book constitutes an addition to the ethnography of the Tikopia whose kinship, economic and ritual institutions have already been described in detail in a series of earlier studies by Professor Firth. But unlike the earlier books this one is based on a re-study made by the author of this little island community in the Pacific after an interval of nearly a quarter century. Professor Firth is here presented with an opportunity not only to re-examine his old materials but also to test and further develop certain concepts for the understanding of social change.

The author begins with the admission that his is a *dual-synchronic* and not a *diachronic* study. In other words, he does not claim to present a direct account of the movement of Tikopia society between 1929 and 1952, but, rather, static pictures of it at these two points of time. This does, nonetheless, present him with opportunities to examine how people cope with changing conditions within the broad framework of the rules prevalent in their own society.

The circumstances of the re-study were in some ways unusual. When Professor Firth revisited Tikopia, the island community was trying to recover from the devastating effects of a hurricane. This natural calamity had caused a severe crisis in the community by disrupting the entire productive system. But in a sense the natural and moral crisis was a blessing in disguise to the anthropologist. It enabled him to see to what extent the social rules could withstand the shock of changing circumstances, how far they required to be modified, which rules were retained and which ones could be dispensed with. In short, it enabled the author to pick out from the multiplicity of rules those which were more basic or fundamental.

But Tikopia has had to face other forces of change besides those set in motion by the hurricane ; and from the long term point of view the former are perhaps more important, although certainly lacking in the dramatic quality of the latter. In 1929 the community

was a relatively closed one. In 1952 its social world was opening up under external pressures, of which those set in motion by the Government, the missionaries and migrant workers returned home were among the most important. Professor Firth shows convincingly that the hurricane did not succeed in disrupting the basic principles of Tikopian social structure ; indeed it would be surprising if it did so, for the island community, situated as it is, must have periodically withstood such calamities in the past. But the forces of modernization belong to an entirely different order, and it would be surprising if they did not leave a more permanent mark on the community.

In the course of this study, Professor Firth elaborates two pairs of concepts which he had presented in an earlier paper* : social structure and social organization, and structural change and organizational change. These concepts try to take into account the role of choice in human behaviour and, as such, constitute an advance on the older structural anthropology in which the strait jacket of social structure left very little room for the analysis of individual choice. Professor Firth's basic position seems to be that while choice is made, and made continuously, it cannot generally by-pass certain broad limits which are set by the institutional structure.

Andre Beteille

The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory. By Don Martindale. Pp. xiv + 560. 1960. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company.

The book presents a comprehensive account of the principal lines along which sociological theory has developed over the last hundred years or so. The different sociological theories are grouped into five major types, positivistic organicism, conflict theory, the formal school, social behaviorism and sociological functionalism. These are of course not mutually exclusive types, and Durkheim, for instance, is discussed under both positivistic organicism and sociological functionalism.

Most of the major types of sociological theory are sought to be related to their philosophical foundations. Apart from

Raymond Firth, 'Social Organization and Social Change', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 84, 1954, pp. 1.20.

philosophy, the author also tries to show the contributions of other related disciplines to the development of sociological thought. Altogether, the book should serve as a very useful guide to the understanding of sociological theories and the kinds of problems to which sociologists have directed their attention.

In a study of this kind, it is difficult to present every point of view with full objectivity, but the author has achieved commendable success in at least drawing attention to the major schools and their exponents. If there is one criticism in this regard it is that perhaps more attention should have been given to the works of contemporary European sociologists. The author discusses at considerable length the works of the earlier German and French sociologists, but when it comes to a discussion of the the present position of the subject, very little is said of what is being done outside the United States.

Andre Beteille

Africa : Its Peoples and their Culture History. By George Peter Murdock. Pp. xiii + 456. 1959. McGraw Hill Book Company Inc. New York. With numerous maps and illustrations. \$ 8.95.

This book attempts a broad ethnographic coverage of the people of Africa including those living north of the Sahara. While no single volume could be expected to deal extensively or even adequately with such a vast and complex subject, Professor Murdock has expended much effort in bringing together the findings of the numerous scholars who have made rich contributions to the ethnography of individual African communities.

The author does not claim to cover every aspect of culture or social structure. Rather, the book 'deals only with food-producing activities, the division of labour by sex, housing and settlement patterns, kinship and marriage, the forms of social and political organization, and a few miscellanea such as cannibalism and genital mutilations' (p. viii). One wonders what is left out. The first part covers, very briefly, such topics as Geography, Race, Language, etc., treating the continent as a whole. Subsequent parts deal in turn with each of the ten groups into which the author divides the peoples of the continent,

The presentation is ethnographic rather than sociological in character, depending primarily on the itemization of a series of

culture traits. A certain lack of depth is to be expected in a study of this kind. It might also be excused, but for the categorical style which Professor Murdock so often chooses to adopt, and of which the following misleading generalization provides a good example, 'Since the first wife normally enjoys for her lifetime a position of superior authority and prestige, every woman knows in advance of her marriage what her future status will be and has no fear of being superseded' (pp. 25-26).

Andre Beteille

Sociology ; An Analysis of Life in Modern Society. By Arnold W. Green. *Third Edition, 1960. Pp. xiii + 672, with numerous illustrations. McGraw Hill Book Company Inc. New York.*

The third edition of this popular elementary sociology text-book is, as before, addressed primarily to the American student. There are two new chapters, 'The Law and Social Control' and 'The Law and Crime and Punishment'. The chatty and discursive style of the book and the copious supply of photographs illustrating various facets of American life are evidently meant to draw the beginner's attention. Unfortunately, a book of this kind is likely to be of doubtful value to the Indian student, particularly if he is a beginner. It is a pity that for this author, as for so many others of his country, modern society is nothing but American society writ large.

Andre Beteille

Anthropology : A Human Science. By Margaret Mead. D. Von Nostrand Company, Inc. Princeton, New Jersey.

This pocket book is a collection of eighteen papers published by Professor Margaret Mead in different scientific journals between 1939 and 1957. The selection falls into three parts. The first part deals with methods of anthropology. The second part is devoted to problems which came in the wake of the second world war. The third part underlines the fact that in the world to-day the relevance of anthropology has increased very much. History, education, nutrition, instinct, analysis of guilt, the cultural bases of literature and even utopias make use of the findings of anthropology. The relevance of one discipline for another is becoming more and more important in the present age.

Each paper throws fresh light on the problem discussed. There is an exhaustive bibliography at the end.

Sachchidananda

Art of the World : Burma, Korea and Tibet. By Alexander B. Griswold, Chewon Kim and Peter H. Pott. London 1964. Methuen, 50 shillings.

This is a valuable addition to an already well-known series on art. The present volume covers Burma, Korea and Tibet ; and the objects described include ceramics, temples, tombs, frescoes and images in terracotta, stone and metal. Buddhist themes of Indian origin seems to be dominant. The description of each photograph is complete and contemporary influences have also been adequately discussed. The volume is richly illustrated with more than seventy coloured plates.

Sachchidananda

Foundations of Sociology. By George A. Lundberg, 1964. David McKay Company Inc. New York.

This paper-back in the McKay Social Series consists of the first part of the book bearing the same name published in 1939. An epilogue embodying a comparison of two current systems of sociological concepts has been added. The purpose of this book is to discuss the philosophy of natural science, only in so far as that philosophy is basic to the development of the natural science of sociology. The author forcefully refutes the charge that the methods and logic of natural science cannot be applied to social phenomena.

Since the publication of the original book in 1939, many of the more common objections have become obsolete. Quantification in social sciences has been accepted as an established technique. Lundberg believes that the apparent difficulty of applying the methods of natural science to societal phenomena flow, not from any intrinsic characteristics of these phenomena, but from the retention in the latter field of postulates long since repudiated in other sciences. He hopes that technical developments within social science will eventually facilitate the formulation of sociological laws with wider validity.

Sachchidananda

Life in a Turkish Village : Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology. By Joe. E. Pierce. 1964. *Holt Rinehart and Winston. New York.*

The author has spent more than six years in Turkey on different assignments. In the first part of the book, we have the description of life in an Anatolian village as seen through the eyes of a small boy who has just stepped on the threshold of manhood. The reader is introduced to a great many activities including some connected with the 'rites de passage': circumcision, marriage and death. The second part gives a brief analysis of life in the village of Demircilar, which consists of about sixty houses, each providing a home for a patrilineal extended family. The village has been pictured as a self-sufficient unit producing almost everything its people consumed. Few people moved out of the village during all their life. National taxes and two years of compulsory military service were the two things that made them conscious of the existence of a central government. The author has succeeded in giving the reader an insight into the basic cultural values of the Turkish villager and an objective understanding of his environment and the pattern of his way of life. One would have wished to see how change is coming over this quiet sequestered village which is only a hundred kilometres from Ankara. But this question has not been touched at all.

Sachchidananda

Mexican-Americans of South Texas. Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology. By William Madsen. 1964. *Holt Rinehart and Winston. New York.*

America is said to be a big melting pot of races and cultures. But the Mexican-Americans described in this study seem to be insulated to a large extent against the melting process which has produced the American nation. They cherish much of their Mexican cultural heritage. The author has shown how these hyphenated citizens derive satisfaction from values which are out of tune with those of the Anglo-Americans

The conflict produced between these two communities due to two distinctive ways of life, which each holds dear, is analysed in meaningful terms. The contrast between the two ways of life as manifested in familial obligations, role of the sexes, honour and respect, achievement and acceptance has been clearly brought out.

Folk medicine including the practice of native curing has been given special attention. How a culture is self-maintaining and anxiety-reducing has been amply demonstrated.

For richness of meaningful detail, clarity of thought and lucidity of expression, this book is commended to all students of simpler societies.

Sachchidananda

Behind Mud Walls. By William and Charlotte Wiser. 1963. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles. \$ 5.00.

The first edition of the book appeared in 1930. It was the result of five years' stay in Karimpur, a village east of Agra.

Thirtytwo years' later Charlotte Wiser came back to the village and wrote three new chapters for the second edition. She was in a unique position to study the changes that had come over the people. In most outward aspects, life in the village was much the same as it was. There was little change in regard to family structure, caste or religious ideas.

But changes have been more marked in economic life. Land reforms have led to a change in the power structure of the village, while technical changes have also affected the practice of agriculture. The school and the panchayat, as well as better medical aid, have contributed to the prosperity of the village. But the social substructure on which the new social forms rest has not been firmly established.

Yet the entire book breathes a spirit of optimism in the future of the people and of the country. There is a strong undercurrent of deep sympathy, hope and faith which is characteristic of missionary village service in India.

Sachchidananda

Hindu Culture, Economic Development and Economic Planning in India. By K. Willam Kapf. Pp. vii + 228. 1963. Asia Publishing House. New York. Rs. 20.00.

The book under review is a collection of ten essays which have been arranged in three parts : (i) Hindu Culture and Economic Change, (ii) Development Projects : Problem of Evaluation and (iii) Economic Planning : Problems and Criteria.

In the author's own words, the central theme of this book is to analyse Hindu culture in its effects on economic development. To make his purpose more explicit, he has attempted to study Hinduism as a religion and social system in the same manner in which Max Weber analysed the protestant ethic and the rise of capitalism.

The author's attempts to analyse Hindu culture as a retarding factor in India's economic development seems to have been done with some depth. In three essays written in collaboration with his wife, Lore L. Kapp (Hindu culture and Economic Development, The Hindu Social System and the Retardation of Economic Development), the author reviews the materials on Hinduism, the caste system, kinship and family structure, and the social organization of the Indian village, in the light of their impact on economic development and economic growth. Such an attempt to look at the different studies in an integrated manner, though to prove a point of view, is significant and useful. The major finding of Kapp is to discern the 'agglomerative' rather than 'selective nature' of Hinduism, which according to him has contributed to the development of a highly segmented social structure and to the rise of hostile factions with serious divisive tendencies. He makes many other generalizations which may not be acceptable for all regions and all sections of the Hindus ; but this depiction of a case study and realization on the part of an economist that traditional values and institutions play a vital role in determining the direction and rate of economic growth is in itself significant.

The essays included in the second and third parts are in many ways not integrated with the first part. In the second part, the author includes two essays on River Valley Projects in which the direct and indirect effects of these projects on the structure of agriculture as well as on institutional arrangements etc. are analysed. In the third part, the author enters into the discussion of the theories of economic development, the proper classification of social costs and social benefit and then on 'economic planning'.

Taken as a whole the book presents a useful analysis of the social, sacred and economic forces which are in operation in India. The author and his wife deserve our appreciation though his

conclusions, to some extent, differ from those of Srinivas (*Cultural Values and Attitudes in India*. MSS.), Dube (*Cultural Problems in Economic Development as observed in Land Reforms, Community Development, the Industrialisation Process and the Family Concepts in Hindu Society*. MSS) and Singer (*Cultural Values in India*, May 1956).

L. P. Vidyarthi

The People are Coming Soon : Analysis of Clackamas Chinook Myths and Tales. By Melville Jacobs. Pp. xii + 359. 1960. University of Washington Press. Seattle. \$ 4-50.

This excellent collection of myths and tales, numbering fifty-five, have been made by the author from three old persons who spoke Clackamas Chinook.

They present not only the external behaviour and vicissitudes of precultural and modern people, but they also express the dominant anxieties and tensions working in the lives of the Indians. It thus acquaints the readers with the ethos of Chinook society.

L. P. Vidyarthi

Contemporary India. Edited by Baidya Nath Varma. Pp. 362. Asia Publishing House. Rs. 22.

There are 19 articles in this book on various subjects and by different writers. The articles have been placed under four sections, namely, Social Institutions, Political Processes, Economic Processes and Socio-Agricultural Processes. Some of the articles like 'Religion of the Hindus' by Haridas Chaudhury, 'The Family in India' by Irawati Karve, 'The Demographic Transition in India' by Ajit Das Gupta, 'The Role of Private Enterprise in a Planned Economy' by C.N. Vakil, 'Social Work in India' by M.S. Gore, 'Social Responsibility in News Communication' by Howard Boone Jacobson, 'Interest Groups in Indian Politics' by Myron Weiner are thought-provoking and packed with information. A few articles are rather loosely written and could have been better omitted. At the same time, there are one or two articles like one on the up-bringing of an Indian child by Bimalendu Gupta, which should have been developed further. Though slightly out of place in a book of this type, this article deserves special mention.

The editor deserves our thanks for getting together a number of social scientists from different disciplines, although much of the introduction could very well have been left out.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

The Position of Women in Primitive Societies and Other Essays in Social Anthropology. By Prof. E. E. Evans Pritchard. Pp. 255. 1965. Faber and Faber Ltd. London. 35s. net.

These essays by Prof. E. E. Evans Pritchard is a notable contribution on the customs of peoples in East Africa. The papers are based on careful field researches and some like 'Collective Expressions of Obscenity in Africa', 'Social Character of Bride-wealth with Reference to Azande', strike new paths. Even a recital of 'Daily life of the Nuer in Dry Season Camps' shows a careful and original approach.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

Arab Border-villages in Israel. By Abner Cohen. 1965. Manchester University Press. 30s. net.

The 1948-49 Arab-Israeli War suddenly underlined the importance of a few Arab villages within an area of Israel, known as the Triangle. Sensitively situated on the border, the villages were subject to pulls and shifts in social and political life. The author lived with the affected people, shared their thoughts and studied the on-coming changes. The book is a valuable contribution as, within its 200 pages, the author has given as a searching study of a sensitive cross-section of a society in a sensitive spot of world politics.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

The Indian National Movement. By Nemai Sadhan Bose. Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta. Rs. 5.

This is a good outline of the Indian national movement and Prof. Bose has marshalled a wide range of facts within the compass of 119 pages. One however feels that Prof. Bose ought to have given us more than an outline. We have now a plethora of books, particularly on what different states have contributed to the freedom movement, and one therefore feels refreshed with a well-balanced and objective study of the present kind.

As an outline, Prof. Bose's book is not expected to cover all the important features. He has given no reference to the work done in England during the first few years of the Congress movement. He has given too few pages to the movement prior to the advent of the Congress.

The book has an excellent index and a selected bibliography.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

A Nigerian Villager in Two Worlds. By *Dilim Okafor-Omali*. Pp. 159. *Faber and Faber*. London. 12s. 6d.

This is an interesting presentation of Nigerian life from the beginning of this century to the present day. The author describes the trends of change due to European administration and the activities of missionaries. The cross-currents which the average educated Nigerian boy faces have been analysed in an interesting manner.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

Muslim Communities in Gujarat. By *Dr. S. C. Misra*. Pp. 207. *Asia*. Rs. 18.

Dr. Misra has made a valuable contribution by a descriptive and critical study of the Muslim communities in Gujarat, although he describes this as a preliminary study of their history and social organization. His analysis of social organization, particularly, shows deep research, careful analysis of facts, and a lucid presentation. Dr. Misra shows how closely parallel many of the Muslim communities are to the Hindus. The M. S. University of Baroda is to be congratulated for having sponsored this excellent study.

The get-up and printing is excellent, for which the Asia Publishing House has already made a name.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

The Structure of Chin Society, By *F. K. Lehman*. Pp. 244, with *Bibliography, Glossary and Index*. *Illinois Studies in Anthropology*, No. 3. *University of Illinois*.

This is a study of the Chins who occupy the mountainous region along Burma's western border with India and Pakistan. Mr. Lehman calls the Chins a sub-nuclear society, distinct both from

peasant society and from a purely tribal society. In this respect, the Chins are similar to a number of the other border tribals in India and Pakistan. The book is neatly executed and has several good maps and photos.

P. C. Roy Chaudhury

Rajasthan Ke Bhil. *Adimjati Sodh Samsthan Prasiksan Kendra, Rajasthan, Udaipur. March, 1965.*

This first publication of the series of the Institute provides a general outline of the Bhils inhabiting the hilly fringe of the State. To add to its utility, a Hindi version of the Verrier Elwin Committee Report on Multipurpose Tribal Blocks has also been given here. The first chapter is on Bhil economy, in which they share all the features of India's rural economy. The second chapter shows how the Bhils are socially organized more or less like the neighbouring Hindu population. The third chapter is on the position of women who are relegated to an inferior position in society. Contact with the outside world has however been responsible for rapid change. The last chapter is on the reform movement initiated by two Bhil leaders of the last century, which however did not end successfully.

Let us hope that the Institute will retain the enthusiasm and fulfil a long felt need of monographs on other tribes of the state.

Awadhesh Coomar Sinha

Miss Rashida Hussain

The Koras & Some Little-known Communities of West Bengal. *By Amal Kumar Das. Special Series No. 5. Pp. 112. Director, Cultural Research Institute, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta. 1964.*

The author has tried to trace the origin of the Koras through different sources, in which the people's own tradition of their origin has not found any place. Economic life, clan and kinship, rites de passage, festivals—all appear to have been sketchily described. With regard to the other communities, the same model has been followed. Sixteen communities have been mentioned in chapter IX, and only nine pages have been devoted to them. The climax has been attained in the case of the Sanyasis, Bhujels, Yogis and Ghartis who have been mentioned by name in one or two sentences.

In this booklet of 112 pages, we find 26 references and quotations from Risley, 5 from Dalton, S. C. Roy, the Census Reports and so on. The book may conveniently be placed in the old tradition of Dalton and Risley. It hardly gives us an impression of having been written in the present decade, when social anthropology has made notable advances. A hotchpotch has been served by not distinguishing tribes from castes. It would have been better if two separate bulletins dealing with little-known scheduled tribes and castes had been issued.

The book is evidently the product of routine office work, and bears no scholarly impression at all.

Awadesh Coomar Sinha
Miss Rashida Hussain

Continuities in Cultural Evolution. By Dr. Margaret Mead. Pp. 471. 1964. Published by Yale University Press. 63s net.

This latest volume in the Terry Lectures is a fascinating and interesting contribution by the well-known author on the nature of human participation in the evolutionary process and the part played by the individual in human history. This book presents a new outlook for considering both impersonal processes in the development of civilization and the role of individual genius in cultural innovation. The author has also sought to prove the existence of continuities in human evolution by illustrations drawn from field studies of primitive societies and by her application of anthropological insights to modern society.

Salil K. Roy Chowdhury

Copper Town in Changing Africa. Dr. Portense Powdermaker. Pp. 391. 1962. Harper & Row, New York & Evanston. \$ 7.95.

This book describes the changes in Northern Rhodesia in the heart of Africa where European mining establishments are gradually absorbing tribal people into industrial organizations. It gives an account of the social life of tribal people and the result of impact of modern forces.

Salil K. Roy Chowdhury

The Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana. Translated by Sir Richard F. Burton. Pp. 252. 1962. E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc, New York. \$ 4.95.

The all-time classical Hindu treatise on love and social conduct

has been very faithfully translated. It is a literary contribution of great importance from the psychological and sociological point of view.

The book contains an analytical introduction by John W. Spellman, Professor of History and specialist in Indology at the Wesleyan University.

Salil K. Roy Chowdhury

The Politics of Kinship. By J. van Velsen. Pp. 318. 1964. Published on behalf of The Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland) by the Manchester University Press. 45s. net.

The book deals with the kinship system and its implication on the political organization and constitution of a group of Tonga people in Nyasaland in Central Africa. The author first analyses the kinship system, concentrating particularly on marriage. In the second half of the book, the author shows how the Tonga people utilise diverse kinship links for political ends. The book is well illustrated with photographs, charts and tables making it very useful for anthropologists as well as for general readers.

Salil K. Roy Chowdhury

Adaptation-Level Theory. By Harry Helson. Pp. 732. Harper & Row, New York, Evanston and London. 1964. \$ 10.75 cents.

This book contains various research studies by the author, his co-workers and others in the field of the adaptation-level theory. The reader will get a new outlook into many of the classical problems of psychology and sociology. It is well illustrated with graphs and tables and has extensive references.

Salil K. Roy Chowdhury

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